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THE LETTERS OF  
*VERITAS,*  
RE-PUBLISHED FROM THE  
*MONTREAL HERALD;*

CONTAINING  
A SUCCINCT NARRATIVE OF THE MILITARY  
ADMINISTRATION OF

SIR GEORGE PREVOST,

DURING HIS COMMAND IN

*THE CANADAS;*

WHEREBY IT WILL APPEAR MANIFEST, THAT THE MERIT  
OF PRESERVING THEM FROM CONQUEST,  
BELONGS NOT TO HIM.

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MONTREAL.

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PRINTED BY W. GRAY.

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JULY, 1815.

NO 237, 10/2

27. 11. 1894

My dear Mr. [unclear]

10. 11. 1894

My dear Mr. [unclear]

I have just received your letter of the 10th inst. and am glad to hear that you are well.

I am, I hope, well at present.

I am, I hope, well at present.

I am, I hope, well at present.

I am, I hope, well at present.

I am, I hope, well at present.

I am, I hope, well at present.

I am, I hope, well at present.

I am, I hope, well at present.



*Wm. Somers*

# VERITAS

*John Young,* OR

A Collection of Papers published in the MONTREAL HERALD, (Canada.)

*To the Editor of the Montreal Herald*

SIR,

THE delusions which have for some time been practised upon the public, have become of late so gross, that it becomes a duty to attempt to counteract their effects, especially as they are intended to deceive people at a distance; particularly in Great Britain, as to the late and present state of this Country.

The last addresses from this place and Quebec to His Excellency SIR GEORGE PREVOST, are so fulsome and false, that they appear to offer a challenge to any man armed with a pen, who shall dare to oppose or expose the sentiments therein expressed.

That Challenge, feeble as any pen is, I accept,

on behalf of all the inhabitants of the Canadas who may value their permanent safety and welfare, more than time serving interests ; and truth and independance, more than misrepresentation and servility.

In consequence, I hereby pledge myself, by a simple narrative of SIR GEORGE'S administration, civil and military, bottomed upon plain but undisguised facts, ( for truth shall be my guide, however unpalatable to some it may be ) to prove that the public is grossly imposed upon ; that Sir GEORGE, neither by his foresight, conciliation, example, or impulse, called forth the energies of the militia of either Province ; and that the merit of preserving them from conquest belongs not to him.

Finally, that he has left the people of this Province, far more seriously divided in sentiment than he found them.

Montreal had the honor of giving the first impulse in Lower Canada, towards a determined resistance of the enemy. Let us endeavour also to have the honor of exposing falsehood, and bringing back the people to the exercise of their sound political senses.

I shall begin, Mr. Editor, next week, to occupy some of your columns, chiefly with Sir George's military conduct, and continue in your succeeding *Heralds*, until I have gone through what I propose.

All the favor I entreat is, that instead of abuse, I may be met in the fair field of argument and matter of fact.

“ VERITAS.”

Montreal, 7th April, 1815.

*To the Editor of the Montreal Herald*

[No. I.]

SIR,

**I**N pursuance of my promise, I now proceed, by a plain relation of facts, to expose the deceptions that have been so unremittingly practised, with a view to impose upon His Majesty's Government, and our fellow subjects at a distance, by attempting to erect Sir George Prevost into an Idol of adoration, that every one was to fall down and worship, or submit to be branded as factions and disaffected.

Many of different sentiments would silently have allowed the matter to pass over, had there been any kind of decency or measure in the incense offered ; but the Addressees have of late been so fulsome, and so devoid of truth, that the most torpid who feel for the honor of their country, must be roused to offer their reasons for refusing to join the idolatrous, in this new species of political worship.

Another powerful motive impels me to come forward on this occasion, which is to endeavor to prevent the stream of materials for the history of the late war, from being polluted by the deleterious mixtures of falsehood and misrepresentation, which panders and sycophants are infusing therein.

Such a proceeding may possibly, by some, be  
called



called libellous, but what I mean to write cannot be a libel, unless historic truth be such. Accusations however of that description, will come with a bad grace from those who have systematically framed and circulated a series of the most grievous calumnies and libels against the memory of Sir James Craig, and these under the sanction of Sir George Prevost, inasmuch as may be fairly inferred, from his receiving an Address from a former House of Assembly, stuffed with gross abuse of his predecessor in office, and praise of himself; which he swallowed without remark or reproof:—and also as may be inferred, from the countenance given at Head Quarters to *that miserable Paper the Spectateur*, which appears to have been set up at first, and to be continued for no other purpose than to vent calumny and abuse against Sir Jas. Craig, both Councils of this Province, and almost every respectable character in the community; whilst it heaped upon Sir George Prevost, the most servile adulation, bottomed upon falsehood.

The war being over, the language of truth can be fearlessly used, without injury to the safety and interests, as in future they cannot be affected by a discussion of the question, whether Sir George's merits as to the past, have been over-rated or not.

Notwithstanding we had for years before, been threatened with war by the United States, yet Sir George having entered upon the exercise of  
his



his functions, apparently with a determination to act contrary to his predecessor in every thing; and Sir James Craig having unfortunately employed one Henry, who proved a traitor, to procure intelligence of the then designs of the American Government against this country; Sir George would employ none, and took no precaution whatever to get information, even of the war when declared. Mr. Foster our wise Minister at Washington, sent notice of the declaration of war; it is true, but by a chance conveyance to New-York, to be forwarded from thence to Lower-Canada, by some safe accidental hand, *no doubt to save expence*, and it arrived at Montreal several weeks afterwards. To Upper Canada he sent no notice at all. The want of intelligence of the enemy's military designs and movements, has been so notorious throughout the war, that I shall pointedly touch thereon hereafter.

Happily individual diligence and zeal made up for these gross and unpardonable neglects. The war was known at Montreal and at Queenston in Upper Canada by private expresses, in six days after its declaration at Washington, and at Quebec and York, the seats of Government, in twenty four hours more.

Some of those about Head Quarters, doubted the intelligence, and considered it some mercantile speculation; but upon re-consideration, they were thrown into the other extreme, and fell into such a state of alarm as is now scarcely  
credible,

credible, and which the subjects of it would be glad to have buried in oblivion—for really from the Chateau downwards, *the first impulse with many at Quebec*, was to push off their wives and families to England, as *it* must soon be besieged.

Fortunately it was otherwise at Montreal ; for here the first impresson was, to remain at our posts and prepare for their defence—hence the flank and artillery companies of the first or English Battalion of Town Militia, of their own mere motion (before orders or arms were issued to them) instantly began to exercise in marching on the Champ de Mars, every morning at 5, and every evening at 6 o'clock. They continued after they got arms, with great perseverance and diligence to learn the use of them, and being joined by another company of that Battalion, became afterwards Embodied Volunteers, active and zealous in defence of the Country.

The flank companies of the Canadian Town Militia, to their praise be it spoken, soon after caught the example, and followed it ; whilst in the country the common language then was, *nous resterons tranquiles chez nous*, or *nous marcherons tous ensemble*, which in plain English are pretty synonymous. The town Sedentary Militia were not tardy in following the example of their flank companies, and the Champ de Mars for the whole Summer of 1812, actually resembled a be hive, from the multitudes actively employed upon it, in learning military exercises.

The month before the war, there had been a draft of Militia to be embodied for three months, which occasioned great discontents over the Province, and which in the Country Parishes of this Island broke out into open violence; at Nouvelle Beauce, and at Pointe aux Trembles, near Quebec, it was nearly as bad.

It was strongly suspected, that this discontent was fomented by some of those, now the staunch advocates of Sir George Prevost. Be this as it may, it is certain that not one of his now self called friends and favourites, stepped forward to undeceive their countrymen, and preach submission to the laws; for after an opposition by some of the refractory, to a party sent to apprehend Militia Deserters, a multitude from the country Parishes assembled at Pointe Claire and La Chine, about a week after the war was known; some in arms, and all determined to go to La Prairie, where the Militia Drafts were, and bring them away in triumph.

Whilst this was in progress, Sir George was on his way from Quebec, and before he arrived, or could possibly be consulted, decision became necessary. Accordingly a Committee of the Executive Council resident here, lost not a moment in sending out a mission to reason with the tumultuous and warn them of their fate, if they persisted in their conduct and designs; and which mission to give it due effect, was immediately followed by a detachment of troops and artillery furnished by General Vincent, as he  
said,



said, upon the requisition of the said Committee; a magistrate was also sent to accompany the military force. The members of that mission, the said magistrate, as also some Gentlemen of their own accord, from the impulse of humanity, did their utmost by reasoning, to persuade the insurgents, whom they met at La Chine on their way to La Prairie, to disperse, but without effect.—They persisted, and became so insolent, that the application of the military force sent out became indispensable; but it was applied with great forbearance and humanity by Lt. Col. Plenderleath, 49th Regt. who commanded; and only one man fell a sacrifice, although some returned the fire of the troops.

Next morning all the flank companies of the Town Militia, after being armed, marched out to the assistance of the troops, whom they joined at La Chine, and the whole united, marched on to Pointe Claire. The insurgents retired from La Chine in the night preceding, and learning what was passing, now dispersed. Detachments were sent out from Pointe Claire, and some of the most forward of the Insurgents were apprehended, whilst others were notified to come to town and surrender, or abide the consequences.

The day after this, the troops and town militia marched back by another road in triumph, and a proud triumph it was to the latter, and to their immortal honor, to have aided in showing the refractory, that there was a power to punish,



as well as protect ; and further by their example, to have contributed in bringing back their countrymen to a sense of their duty ; as from that moment matters took quite a different turn.

But who will pretend to decide, what the extent of the effect of a contrary example on that critical occasion might have been ; or even had the Town Militia remained indifferent Spectators ; or had the Committee of Council been less prompt in their measures, or had they waited to consult the Governor. In either of these possible cases, the infection of insurrection might have spread like wild fire, and Pointe Claire and Nouvelle Beauce, been joined together by the intermediate parishes ; for the multitude of every country is giddy, and there are always self styled Patriots ready to blow the coals. I shudder to think of it, but thank God, instead of this, Sir George (who had no hand whatever in bringing about this happy change) had only to come and thank the town militia on their return, and next day to receive the submission of the late leading insurgents, several of whom were committed, tried, and convicted.

Sir George gave one of his Parliamentary friends (when he waited upon him at the Government House, Montreal, on that occasion) a most violent philippic, for his double dealing in the business ; but he has been since re-admitted into the corps of puffers of his pretended fame—whilst those who at that time were the  
means

means of saving him and the Province, and at all times have been foremost in giving the example of a determination to resist the enemy, are calumniated as a faction, because they are non-adorers. Those who are now his bosom friends, are many of them men (who to say no worse) stirred not one step in the day of need, to give an example to their refractory countrymen—but who were ready after the impulse was given to profit by it so far, as to *condescend* to accept of lucrative situations in the militia, some of whom however soon resigned, when they found that such situations were not to be sinecures.

Now let it be borne in mind, that the discontents above said about the militia drafts, originated from an act passed and executed during Sir George's own administration. Here, then was a fine opportunity for demonstrating by *deeds*, instead of *words*, the devotion of the Canadian population to their political idol, and of his great influence over them, but nothing was seen or felt of either, until after the active example of the English at that alarming crisis, had produced the happy change which ensued; and which change has enabled his satellites (carefully concealing the cause) by falsehoods and misrepresentations, to make such use of it, in the endless addresses manufactured since, with a view to impose upon people at a distance, who do not know the real state of the case.—Surely it cannot be supposed, that Sir George was so negligent

gent of his duty at such a crisis, as not to have used his influence, if he had any ; but whether he did use it or not, is for him and his friends to settle.—All we know is, that there were no visible useful effects of it, at that alarming period.

There is a piece of history about the Militia Act which should be had in remembrance.—The leaders in the then Assembly, now warm friends of Sir George, got a clause inserted in the Bill, to prohibit service in the militia by substitution, a measure unprecedented even in the annals of Bonaparte's tyranny, and another clause to prevent militiamen, when embodied, from being employed as servants to officers.—These were especially intended to create discontent among the English part of the population, as being supposed to attack their feelings in tender points, consequently as general discontents in the execution of the militia act were expected ; it was thought that by adroit management, it would thence be easy to ascribe their origin to the English.\*

The loyalty and zeal, however, of that class, defeated the plan ; the draft took place, and the English furnished their quota promptly ; but contrary to expectation, the complaints were so violent among the Canadians about the prohibition of substitution, that some of the authors of  
that

\* By English, I mean those born in Great Britain, or Ireland, or in any other part of the King's dominions, of British or Irish descent.

th at most tyrannical measure, were actually reproached and insulted for it.—The clause about militiamen as servants was broken through by some of its framers, who had become officers, doubtless not intending it to affect themselves.

What a proud consideration it is for the English, who have given an unbought and unremitted support to the Government in whatsoever related to the defence of the country during the war, to reflect, that the most pointed neglect and unjust insinuations, have been (and I trust ever will be) unable to make them swerve from their duty to their King and Country.—And it adds to that lofty sentiment, to be able to say with truth, that if the Governor's alledged enemies had been as cool and indifferent at the outset, about the defence of the Country, as many of his pretended warm friends were, the Province would have been lost.

*VERITAS.*

N. B. In my next I shall proceed to some of the operations in Upper Canada.



*To the Editor of the Montreal Herald*

SIR,

MY first number having had reference to transactions in this Province, let me pass on to Upper Canada.—After the declaration of war by the United States, had obtained belief at Quebec, Sir George Prevost dispatched orders to Captain Roberts, commanding at the Island of St. Joseph, to act upon the defensive.

General Brock was at York, when he received the account of the war, which was conveyed from Queenston in a very short time; and immediately after he sent notice thereof to Lt. Col. St. George, at Amherstburg, and to Capt. Roberts. This express was soon followed by another to St. Joseph, whereby *General Brock* directed Capt Roberts to attack Michilimackinac immediately, if he saw a prospect of success.

That Officer, who had only a handful of invalid Veterans under his orders, was stimulated to act by the traders there, who saw the importance and necessity of instant decision, in order to circumvent the enemy, and secure the Indians in that quarter, who were then not at war with the United States. Those traders promised their zealous co-operation, which they faithfully performed. Captain Roberts con-

curring,

curring in their opinion, determined (much to his credit) to follow the instructions of General Brock, his immediate Commander, in preference to those of Sir George; and accordingly an expedition was organized, consisting of 30 or 40 Veterans, 200 traders and their engagees, with about 400 Indians, who proceeded to attack the American fort Michilimackinac; which, upon a landing being effected upon that Island, surrendered by capitulation, the 17th of July 1812, (a month after the declaration of war at Washington,) without a drop of blood spilt on either side.

Colonel St. George, at Amherstburg, received from General Brock, information of the war in time to enable him to lay hold of the baggage and medicines of General Hull's army, as the vessel therewith was entering Detroit river, in the hope of our ignorance of the purpose for which that army was approaching by land from the interior. This circumvention of Hull, affected him greatly, and marred his after proceedings. He however crossed over to the British side at Sandwich, on the 12th of July, 1812, with an exterminating proclamation in his hand, (brought from Washington) after a previous cannonade by him of that defenceless village.

Information of this invasion was soon received by General Brock, at Fort George, where he had speedily arrived from York, with an intention

tention of attacking Fort Niagara ; but he hesitated about that measure from various considerations, part whereof were his having had no official account of the war, nor any order from Sir George Prevost to guide his proceedings. Indeed it is asserted and believed, that the former did not receive from the latter any written order or instruction for six weeks after the war was declared. So hopeless it seems, did Sir George consider the state of Upper Canada, that he avoided meddling therewith, leaving the gallant Brock to his own counsel, and thereby cunningly reserving to himself the power of censure or praise, according to events.

Thus commenced that indecisive conduct, which unhappily Sir George so stedfastly adhered to, during the whole course of the war.

General Brock issued at Fort George an admirable proclamation, in counteraction of Hull's ferocious one, and sent Colonel (now General) Procter, with a small reinforcement (his means allowing of none other) to Amherstburg, where he assumed, the command, whilst the General returned to York, to meet the Legislature of Upper Canada, which, as President of that Province, he had called together, for an extra session upon the war being known. This session was short, and on the 6th of August, 1812, he left York with about 100 volunteer Militia, which were increased about Long Point, the whole proceeding by land and water to Amherstburg.

Owing to the great exertion and personal

ex-

example of their beloved Commander, they reached that place about the 12th of that month, before which time Hull had re-crossed to Detroit, after committing various excesses, having failed in his attempts to pass the little river Canard, above Amherstburg, and having lost a convoy of provisions, which was captured by a party of the 41st Regt. and Indians, that had been sent into his rear by Colonel Procter, before General Brock arrived, in order to interrupt Hull's communications, and intercept his supplies.

Hull on learning the arrival of Brock, was appalled, as he had previously received information of the capture of Michilimackinac, whereby the northern hive of Indians, as he termed them, was let loose against him.

General Brock lost not a moment, and marching up to Sandwich with what troops and militia he had collected, and a band of Indians under the brave and ever to be lamented celebrated Chief Tecumseh, he cannonaded the enemy in their position at Detroit, and next day passed over with his whole force to the American side some miles below, with a determination to assault that post; but General Hull prevented that necessity, by capitulating, to surrender himself and his army of 2500 men, with 25 pieces of cannon, which took place on the 16th of August, 1812. This most important event was effected without loss, and an invaluable acquisition



tion of musquetry and cannon thereby obtained, whereof we were greatly in want, especially of the former, for the militia, who now had the honor of equipping themselves with the spoils they so meritoriously aided in capturing from the enemy. General Brock, alike humane as brave, allowed the American Militia to go home, and after providing for their return in safety to Kentucky and Ohio, leaving Colonel Procter in command at Detroit, he flew back as it were to Fort George, which he reached on the 24th of the before mentioned month.

*Then or before*, was communicated to him the information of that *deadly armistice*, concluded by Sir George Prevost with General Dearborn, which had so fatal an effect upon all the future operations, and which tied up the hands of the gallant Brock, from executing his intended plan of sweeping the American Posts, to Sackett's Harbour inclusive—an operation that most certainly could have been then effected.

This armistice proposed by Sir George Prevost merits serious consideration, from its operation being so greatly in favor of the enemy at that time, and so disadvantageous to us.—A period most precious to us, if we had profited of it with vigour, was thereby lost in inaction, and the enemy in consequence, allowed to recover from the panic, into which they were thrown by Hull's capture.

The transport of the American Stores, ord-  
D
nance

nance and provisions, of each of which they were much in want, not being prohibited by that armistice, was accordingly protected and facilitated by it on Lake Ontario, and along the Niagara frontier, beyond the enemy's most sanguine hopes, whilst their then only disposable and invading force, under General Hull, on the Detroit frontier, was left at full liberty, to profit by circumstances, the armistice as to him being at his option.

Most fortunately, however, Hull's business was settled by capitulation before the armistice was known to General Brock or him ; but had it reached him in time, he of course would gladly have accepted it, to gain delay for the arrival of reinforcements, and a supply of provisions, from which would have resulted the salvation of his army, the prejudicial consequences whereof to us are incalculable ; for, had a knowledge of it reached the Indian nations at that time, such a disgust and distrust would have been thereby excited, as could never have been removed ; and the first effect of which would have appeared in the immediate dispersion of the Indians, whose powerful and indispensable aid, at that early period of the contest, would have been totally lost to us. To the facts and observations above stated, I must add the extraordinary circumstance, that a Staff Officer was sent express from Montreal to Upper Canada, to prevent General Brock from proceeding to the western District, but which most happily was prevented



prevented from taking effect, by the extraordinary rapidity of the movements of that most zealous and gallant officer, who had moved thither before the officer so sent could reach him.

Madison's rejection of this armistice, was followed by that *chilling defensive system*, which General Brock was instructed by Sir George to follow, and which palsied his operations, until his country had to mourn over his fatal loss, at the battle of Queenston, on the 13th of October, 1812.

Such however was the effect of the impulse he had given, and the valour and zeal wherewith the regular troops, militia, and Indians, had been inspired, that the valuable effects thereof survived him, and gave a brilliant victory on that day to his successor, General Sheaffe, a lover of armistices also, who in proof thereof, made *one of his own*, which threw away most of the advantages of that victory; for he neglected (although strongly urged thereto,) to take Fort Niagara, which could have been done on the afternoon of the day of the Queenston battle, without loss, as the enemy had temporarily, entirely, or almost entirely, then evacuated it. Had he done this, and at same time crossed over a part of his force to Lewis Town, as he was urged to do, and as Brock would have done, had he survived, the whole Niagara line would have been cleared of the enemy, and all our after disasters in that quarter prevented,

It has been urged in favor of Sir George's timid defensive system, that it was proper, in order to avoid irritating the enemy, and thereby uniting them ;—as also that his force was inadequate to offensive warfare. Now no positions were ever more untenable ; for to think of conciliating an enemy, by leaving to him the full benefit of maturing in security all his means of annoyance against you, and at the same time muzzling yourself, is a most extraordinary doctrine. Surely to do so, must ensure success to that enemy, as we know, that success will unite discordant parties and interests ; whilst defeats promote disunion, and would have strengthened the anti-war party in the States, by furnishing to them unanswerable arguments, when depicting the folly and impolicy of the war, which had been so wantonly declared by the Madisonian party.

Were facts in support of this view of the subject necessary, they would be found, in the effects upon the public mind in that country, produced by the capture of Michilimackinac and Detroit, with Hull's army.

Did these events irritate and unite the enemy against us ? *no* ; they increased irritation it is true, but against their own Government,

In discussing the merits or demerits of Sir George's *defensive system*, it is proper to define, what I mean by *offensive* and *defensive*. Accordingly, I do not mean to contend for such a  
system

system of operations, as would have aimed at a military occupancy during the war, of any one Post in the States along the Canada frontier, excepting Fort Niagara, and perhaps Oswego, with such Posts *within the Indian territory only* as might have been necessary for *their and our defence*: but I do most strongly contend, that a system of attack upon the depots of the enemy along our frontiers, whether military or naval, for the purpose of destroying them before completion, and then retiring into our own territory, would have been the best, the cheapest, and in all points of view, the most effectual defence for these provinces, conjointly with a respectable naval force upon the Lakes, to cover and give security and efficiency to such a mode of warfare.

I also contend, that this would not have irritated, but disunited the enemy, because the withdrawal in succession of our attacking force, immediately after the attainment of the objects thereof respectively, would have proved by facts, not to be misunderstood, that our purpose was not attack beyond the strict line of what was indispensable to ward off the effects of the preparations making at those depôts, with a view to our subjugation.

And as to deficiency of means, or of force, under the orders of Sir George, for executing such a system of attack, I deny the fact. Look only at what was done by the active energy of a Brock, with

with a handful of men ; also what more he would have done had his hands not been tied at a period so ill timed ; and contrast these with the drowsy inactivity of Sir George Prevost, and its fatal consequences. It is activity and energy of mind which are valuable requisites in the qualifications of a military commander, and not the locomotive faculty of a Post-boy, which can be better executed, in general, by a substitute than a principal.

Most military men will allow, that a long line cannot be effectually defended by a few troops, if the enemy be left wholly at liberty without counteraction, to choose his time and place of attack ; whereas, if instead of attempting to defend the whole line, the less important points were abandoned for a time, and the force concentrated in one or more important positions ; and *such force* when so concentrated, converted into an active, instead of a passive *one*, by either attacking the enemy at once, in his chief preparatory depôts ; or by threatening several of them, turn feints into real attacks as opportunities offered ; the tables would, by such a system, be turned, and the enemy (especially an undisciplined one) be reduced to the defensive.

According to the well known principle in mechanics, that velocity is equal to weight, a small force, by well directed activity of operation, may be made to produce a greater effect, than three  
times



times its numerical strength could, when tied to the disheartening system of mere defence.

Let me pause here, and return to Lower-Canada, for the purpose of making this remark, which no sophistry can overturn, viz :—that the capture of Michilimakinac, with that of Detroit, and General Hull's army ; and the ocular proof thereof afforded to the population of Lower Canada by the march of that General, his officers and regular troops, as prisoners through Montreal ; came so opportunely in aid of the La Chine business, as in conjunction therewith, and the previous activity and zeal displayed at Montreal ; *to strike dumb the preachers of prudence*, to fix the wavering, and to confirm the great bulk of the people in loyalty.

Now in the name of truth, what share or merit had Sir George Prevost in all this ? *None !* notwithstanding all the falsehoods so industriously circulated by the \* Editor of the Quebec Gazette,

NOTE \* This Gentleman is now calling out for a *truce or armistice*, which doubtless would be very convenient for the purpose of his party, in order that the *poison* infused by his and their *false representations*, might take full effect, by withholding the *antidote of truth* ; but that cannot be, after such continued deceptions, and more especially after the *most false and impudent two per cent doctrine*, promulgated by that Editor, wherein he makes the approval of Sir George's measures, *the criterion of loyalty* ;—consequently by that rule, those who stirred themselves most actively in the support of *the Government*, during the war, and at its commencement marched to suppress an insurrection striking at the vitals of our defence, are to be held *as disloyal* ; and the insurgents with *their abettors* at that time, *good men and true*—for true it is, that most of the *former* are *non-addressers*, whilst all of the latter are *addressers*.



Gazette, and reprinted at Halifax. He was merely a passive instrument at that time ; neither did *he* give any orders or impulse, nor did *his now pretended friends* give any example, to produce or contribute to, *such happy events*. In the whole of *these events*, all that *he* had to do, was to reap the fruits of what others had sown ; but much of which fruit was allowed to perish without being used ; and yet at this day it would be supposed (if we listened only to the addressers, and could banish the use of our memories) that all was owing to Sir George.

It is well known that a person by repeatedly mentioning a story, however unfounded, at last believes in it, and so it may be with many, who aid in the delusion practised and practising ; but it is in the recollection of many, what surprise was expressed by one of Sir George's suite, upon their arrival at Montreal, the beginning of July, 1812 ; when he exclaimed—" Why you are quite a different people here, for instead of alarm, all seem to have laid aside business, and to think of nothing but preparation to resist the enemy."

It has been often said, that Sir George has the merit of doing what Sir James Craig would not have attempted, viz : to defend both Provinces ; whilst the other would have thought of nothing but securing Quebec. As to what Sir James would have done, can be only matter of opinion now, as dead men tell no tales ; but judging

ing of him by the preparations he made in vessels upon the Upper Lakes, bequeathed to his successor ; and by his capacity and energy in other respects ; I think there can be no presumption in supposing, that had he lived, and been placed under the like circumstances as Sir George was in, when he arrived at Montreal in July, 1812, he would have made a more important use of the facts and advantages then developed. Besides it amounts almost to proof, that Sir George had not decided upon a general defence before he came to Montreal, else he would have instructed General Brock, and given other indications of such a determination, at an earlier period than he did.

Now does it require the *gift of divination* to say, what would have been *the consequence*, if General Brock's conduct, and his instructions to Colonel St. George, and afterwards to Colonel Procter, at Amherstburg, as also to Captain Roberts, at St. Joseph, had been the same as General Prevost ? *No*,—for *it* would assuredly have been this : St. Joseph would have been captured by the American Garrison of Michilimackinac, instead of capturing them. Amherstburg would have fallen to Hull. The Indians, from necessity, must either have joined the enemy, or become tame spectators of our fate. General Hull and his army would have descended like a torrent, increasing in its course by bands of American militia, and of disaffected Americans in Upper Canada, until they had swept the

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country

country, certainly to Montreal ; but probably to Quebec ; for, as Sir George would have shut himself speedily up in that fortress, it is to be feared, that our militia would have listened to *the preachers of prudence, now his idolizers*, and might have prevailed upon them *à rester tranquilles chez eux*.

I therefore re-affert upon substantial grounds, that not to Sir George, but General Brock, the Indians, the Traders and Engagees, and Upper Canada Militia, in aid of the few regular troops then in that Province ; and to the Montreal Militia, in aid of the few regulars, with the measures pursued here before SIR GEORGE'S arrival, at this place, the salvation of both Provinces, at the commencement of the war, is, under the favor of divine providence, to be ascribed. In my next, I shall sketch some ulterior operations ; having already occupied beyond a full proportion of your independent paper,

“*VERITAS.*”

Montreal, 18th April, 1815.

## [NO. III.]

*To the Editor of the Montreal Herald*

SIR,

There is no profession that requires such a variety and superiority of attainments and qualifications as the Military, to become distinguished therein. How few obtain the appellation of a great Commander ! but whether Sir George be really entitled thereto, as his admirers would lead us to believe, may be partly judged of by the following, as well as the preceding relations of facts.

Soon after his arrival in Canada, he made a rapid tour through the upper part of this Province ; no doubt for the purpose of viewing it with a military eye, and thereby personally judging of the best positions for defence, in case of need. This was highly proper, but like many after excursions, no visible result followed.

The winter of 1811 passed on without any preparation contemplative of war, (the before  
E 2 mentioned



mentioned militia act excepted) notwithstanding the fulminations in Congress against us during all that winter ; the open avowal of their designs upon Canada, and the actual spreading of the cloth for Peter B. Porter's war feast, as announced in the Committee of Congress, whereof he was the organ.

The two internal keys of this Province, viz : Isle aux Noix and Coteau du Lac, were either despised or overlooked in that tour, notwithstanding the importance decidedly given to the former, especially, by the French Engineers, and by General Haldimand, who was an able judge of positions, and who had expended a large sum of money in fortifying it, in the former American war,

The cause of this neglect I know not with certainty, but the fact is, that Isle aux Noix was not occupied until some time after the war, and might have been seized by the enemy, had he then possessed sufficient military capacity to estimate its value. Coteau du Lac was not occupied until summer 1813.

Not a gun boat or vessel was built on the river Richelieu at, or above St. Johns, or even thought of, until the Almighty threw into the power of the brave 100th regt. and a few artillery in garrison at Isle aux Noix, two of the enemy's armed vessels, which were captured in a most gallant style, by the aid of a gun boat or two, built at Quebec, by order of Sir James Craig,

Craig, which had been conveyed over land to Saint John's; and which captures formed the basis of a flotilla for lake Champlain, and first suggested the idea of endeavoring to command it,

It has been matter of surprise to many, why a number of flat boats, capable of carrying heavy guns were never built at La Chine, to be stationed below the Cascades, at Isle Perrault, or where-soever else in lake St. Louis, might have been considered most advisable and convenient, for a rapid movement to attack the enemy, if they descended the St. Lawrence, immediately after passing the rapids of the Cedars, before they could collect together, and form; it being certain, that their boats must necessarily fault or pass the rapids unconnected, and by comparison, as it were, in Indian file, or in sections of a very small front; consequently their discomfiture would have been easy, had they been met immediately after, by a respectable number of armed boats of ours, ready and fresh for the attack.

In short, military foresight, anticipation, or counteraction of the possible or probable movements or designs of the enemy, formed no part of Sir George's system of operations; if any system or plan there ever was, which may be doubted, seeing the *vacillating measures* pursued upon all occasions; as hardly a regiment could be moved from one place to another, without

without half a dozen counter orders ; and consequently to repair a disaster, always cost us double or quadruple the expence, and number of men, that would have been necessary by timely precaution to prevent it ; besides thereby always receiving, instead of giving the law to the enemy.

The most palpable and fatal error however of all, is yet to be told, viz : that of not *preserving the command of the Upper Lakes*. I use the word *preserving* instead of *acquiring*, on this occasion, because Sir James Craig left Sir George Prevost a most decided superiority upon those Lakes ; for on each, we had several vessels of force, and the enemy had only the Oneida brig of 16 guns, upon Ontario, and the Adams of about the same size, but half armed and manned, upon Erie.

The latter vessel was just rebuilt at Detroit, when captured by General Brock, and became a prize to us, until thrown away by some strange misconduct, along with the Caledonia, belonging to the North West Company, which vessels came down with American prisoners, and part of the guns taken at Detroit ; when on arriving at Fort Erie, to accommodate the landing of those prisoners upon the American side, they incautiously were anchored so far over towards that shore, as to be boarded in the night, taken and carried away. The Adams got aground afterwards, and was destroyed : but the Caledonia,

donia, although injured, was preserved by the enemy, and became an instrument in the disastrous capture of our fleet upon Lake Erie the next year.

The *command of the Lakes*, and especially those bordering upon Upper Canada, is so evidently an object of primary consideration in the defence of the Canadas, and the upper province in particular, that it furnishes matter of astonishment, how a military man could be so ignorant of, or blind to, *its importance*, as to *allow it* to be wrested from him, when the means of *the preservation of that command* were so completely in his power.

In conjunction with the naval command of those internal waters, the friendship of the Indians was a point of equal importance, at the commencement of the war. The foresight and energy of a *Brock preserved the latter*.—The cold indifference of a *Prevost lost the former*; and yet the Addressers\* have the shameless effrontery to say, “the smallness of the regular  
“ army with which your Excellency was left to  
“ withstand the whole efforts of the United  
States,

NOTE \* The arts used to obtain signatures to the Addresses, are in many instances most shameful. Officers of militia have called their men together, and made them sign, or rather make their marks by roll call. In other cases, the people have been impounded in the Church after Mass, (but my information leads me to believe that the Clergy had no agency in this,) and there are instances where youths, who could write, have been made to sign, to encrease the actual number of signatures.



“ States, for two years, and the insufficiency of  
 “ the Naval force on the Lakes, have exposed his  
 “ Majesty’s arms to some reverses,” whilst it is  
 notorious from the facts above stated, that *this*  
*insufficiency on the Lakes*, proceeded entirely  
 from neglect of the idol thus addressed.

How came they to dare to venture upon  
*such an imposture* ? Is it because they reckon  
 upon the like banishment of the use of memory  
 in the reading of those Addresses in Canada, as  
 is necessary in all the operations of the junto ;  
 or if not so, is it the idea that no person here,  
 durst attempt to expose *it* ; or finally is it, that  
 at a distance (as the Addresses are manufactured  
 for exportation) they counted upon no one  
 finding *it* out, as they meant to keep their own  
 counsel.

However, I do entertain some hope, that they  
 have reckoned without their host ; and that *Le*  
*Bon Vieux Temps* and myself, who are fellow  
 labourers in the same vineyard, for the correction  
 of falsehood, and support of truth, without  
 having any knowledge of, or communication  
 with each other, will open the eyes of many, if  
 we cannot of all the blind ; for of the cure of the  
 honest really blind patriots, I cannot doubt, but  
 of the wilfully blind, they must be left to be  
 cured by their own folly, and the contempt of  
 all independent minds.

Upon the subject of the upper Lakes, their  
 neglect in 1812, cannot be excused, even upon  
 the

the principle of ignorance or inadvertancy ; for the common table talk that summer at Montreal was the incompetency of the Officers and men on board the King's ships on Lake Ontario (and that talk is supposed to have been always better known at Head Quarters, than the designs of the enemy,) and that a strong remedy was necessary, or the command thereof would be lost. Of that incompetency there was furnished the most striking proof by Commodore Earle, when he went over in the Royal George with others to Sacket's Harbour, in summer 1812, to destroy the Oneida Brig; and on arriving there, finding her hauled into the inner harbour, and one or two of her guns landed and planted on the bluff point, (for then there was no garrison) without cover, which fired at him ; the gallant Commodore immediately turned his tail or stern to the enemy, and returned to Kingston *re infecta*, but with whole bones. Yet no notice was taken of this at Head Quarters, nor any remedy attempted, and he remained in command of the Ontario Squadron, until the arrival of Sir James Yeo, and then forsooth was offended at being superseded.

Sir George in not noticing this conduct of Earle, might possibly have had an anticipatory feeling of what might happen to himself at that place, at a future day. It is proper to remark, that Commodore Earle does not belong to the Royal Navy.

Every one wondered why Sir George did not make an energetic application to Capt. Pascoe, of the Tartarus sloop of war, (who arrived at Quebec from Halifax after the war was known there) to lay up his ship, and march with his officers and crew to Lake Ontario, for the purpose of destroying the Oneida Brig, and every craft on that Lake, belonging to the enemy ; which assuredly in such case, could have been completely accomplished, and the said officers and crew brought back to Quebec, in less than eight weeks after their departure, if their return to that place should have been insisted upon.

We all know, that Sir George could not have commanded Capt. Pascoe to do so, but we also know the anxiety of a British officer, in either service, for active employment ; and that if a strong case had been made out, which surely at that time required no ingenuity, as a plain statement of the truth, would have been sufficient to convince Capt. Pascoe that the salvation or loss of the Canadas, *might depend* upon his acquiescence or refusal. In such case, who can doubt, that he would have consented ; and further, that he would have been applauded and promoted for so doing, whilst thousands of lives and millions of money, would have been saved by the measure, if due vigilance had been continued afterwards, to prevent the nest from being formed at Sacket's Harbour.

Instead of this, so little feeling had Sir George upon this grand arm of defence, that a lifeless  
common



common place attempt was made, to get seamen at Quebec, as if in time of peace, for 8 or 10 dollars a month, when merchants were giving more than twice as much; but what would seamen have availed under such Officers as Earle?

I will further ask the Quebec Addressers, who are also alive *to the insufficiency of the Naval force on the Lakes*, why all the ship carpenters of Quebec and Montreal, and all the batteau carpenters of the Province, were not engaged to keep up the superiority we had in armed vessels on the Upper Lakes, at the commencement of the war, and to build batteaux, the neglect of which latter, also occasioned infinite detriment to the military service?

I will also ask them, whether they ever heard, that a Quebec Ship Builder, who would have contracted for a 36 gun Frigate on Lake Ontario, to be speedily built, was not laid aside, for the sake of a thousand pounds in his demand beyond what Sir George would agree to give?

After all this, it is the acmé of assurance to insinuate, that *Ministers* were to blame for such insufficiency, especially as *they* could only have a knowledge of our wants here through *Sir George's information*; and if *he* was silent or defective in explanation of his wants, *he*, not *Ministers*, ought justly to be blamed. But it is known, and has been declared in Parliament by *Ministers*, that they never furnished less, and frequently



frequently much more, than the requisition from hence.

When a defective military force is mentioned, let it be recollected, that Sir George had the benefit of two strong additional regiments, which arrived early in summer 1812 to replace two weak ones, and he very properly kept the whole.

Appearances warrant the belief, that Sir George was first roused from his torpor about the Lakes and Indians, by the memorial of the Committees of trade, presented in October 1812, (since republished in the Quebec Gazette, from a Halifax paper) wherein, the importance of those objects was forcibly dwelt upon, and the necessity of having Officers and seamen from the Royal Navy, strongly pointed out. Accordingly, an exertion in shipbuilding on the lakes was made in winter 1812, and officers and seamen from the Royal Navy arrived early in May 1813.

The exertions of the enemy at Sackett's Harbour, then an open unfortified place, was such before the end of summer 1812, as to produce, in October of that year, four armed schooners in addition to the Oneida brig, with which Commodore Chauncey chased Commodore Earle in the Royal George, into Kingston Harbour; where we were cannonaded by the enemy, whose Commodore and squadron went off with flying colours in triumph, and returned to Sackett's Harbour, where they, that autumn, launched their

their new frigate the Madison.

They also made exertions on Lake Erie, where they equipped some small armed vessels : but by navigating on those lakes very late in 1812, they narrowly escaped that destruction of their armed force from the elements, which our means ought to have inflicted, at an earlier period of the season.

The exertions in building on Lake Ontario, made by Sir George in winter 1812, were certainly great ; but by a strange fatality, the largest of the two frigates laid down, was at York, and the other at Kingston, thus throwing away above half of the effect—for by thus dividing our force, it was in the power of the enemy to prevent the conveyance of guns and stores for the ship at York ;—or even if those could have been conveyed at an immense expense by land in winter, the junction afterwards would have been impracticable, from the facility of interposing a superior force in the lake between those places.

There was another striking impropriety in building at York, without providing the means of security there, as the works of defence, projected by General Brock (when he contemplated, before the war, the removal of the naval depot from Kingston to York, by reason of the proximity of the former to the States in winter by the ice) were discontinued by orders from below, and never resumed. The position intended

ded to have been fortified by General Brock, near York, was capable of being made very strong, had his plan been executed ; but as it was not, nor any other plan of defence adopted, a ship yard without protection, became an allurements to the enemy, as was felt to the cost of the Inhabitants of York.

I shall defer to a future number, the consideration of the enemy's naval preparations upon Lake Erie, and our supineness there in summer 1813.

The storm that had been long threatening the Lower Province from Plattsburg, at length seemed ready to burst upon it, as notice was given at Montreal on the evening of 17th of November 1812, that the enemy were advancing, and that upon a certain signal of alarm being fired from the citadel, the troops and embodied militia were to prepare to cross over to Longueuil. Next afternoon the alarm guns were fired, and the troops and Battalion of English embodied Volunteers, were in consequence put in motion. The latter, although they had to collect over the town and different suburbs, were upon the beach equipped for service nearly as soon as the regulars, where they had to wait two hours for boats, which being at length procured, they crossed the river in the dark, and marched to Laprairie, where they arrived at midnight, and were then distributed in quarters. The Canadian flank companies of the town, went over the day following or afterwards, and  
the



the whole country militia in the adjoining counties, were in movement, with an alacrity that will for ever do them honor.

The weather became very severe, and the enemy retired after encountering a picket of indians near River La Cole, who were so well managed as to occasion the enemy to fire upon each other in the night, whilst the picket fell back and escaped without loss. Upon its being known that the enemy had retired, the troops and militia returned to their quarters and homes, which closed the operations of 1812, in Lower Canada.

Almost every body was sensible what might have been done by us on Lake Ontario in 1812, and a sad mortification at the want of exertion there ensued. All, however, looked forward with hope to the winter, when a confident expectation was entertained, that past neglects would be then compensated for, by a coup de main of the troops across the ice, to destroy the nest of Hornets collected at Sackett's Harbour, whilst in their torpid state.

The winter came, and seemed to have been made by the Almighty to favor the enterprize, for the ice was never known so good. All were on the tiptoe of expectation, when Sir George came up in February, and proceeded on to Kingston. A movement of troops was looked for, but alas none was made, and all evaporated *in fumo* ; but a desultory attack upon Ogdensburg,



densburg, in consequence of a kind of negative permission given by His Excellency on passing the post at Prescott, the success of which attack proved that the enemy were then wholly unprepared *at Sackett's*, as their Commander was actually at Albany, and no preparation for resistance *there* thought of, as no attack was expected, until awaked by the fate of Ogdensburg, when all was hurry and bustle, in every quarter. They then began to collect a force to prevent, what ought by that time to have been by us effected ; and there can be no doubt about our success, had we made the attempt without creating previous alarm.

The public being thus again disappointed in their favourite *delenda est Carthago* (*Sackett's Harbour*), relapsed into a gloom, which continued until dissipated by the electrifying news of the arrival of Sir James Yeo, at Quebec, on 5th May 1813, in the Woolwich, with officers and seamen of the Royal Navy, for the ships built and building at Kingston, the frigate at York having been, as was to be expected, previously burnt. Sir James and his people reached Kingston in less than two months from Portsmouth.

The Almighty appeared again to favor us, and the exertions made at Kingston after the arrival there of those officers and seamen, to equip the fleet, was so great, that an attempt was determined to be made upon Sackett's Harbour, whilst Commodore Chauncey and his fleet were up the lake. Sir George had accompanied Sir  
James

James to Kingston. Troops accordingly were embarked, and Sir George himself was most unfortunately along with them.

The fleet failed—the wind blew propitiously, and they were soon off the wished for Harbour of Sacketts, but no attack was made that day. Here again stepped in that accursed indecision which is so ruinous in military operations, and it is generally supposed, the troops would have returned without making any attempts to land, had not some American troops, next day (which coming from Oswego in boats, had been chased from an Island by our Indians) come and surrendered themselves to our fleet.

This encouraged a landing to be made, although the wind having become contrary, it thwarted a naval co-operation, but it was not necessary to the success of the enterprise.

The troops were disembarked, but without artillery, and advanced with their usual spirit, when the enemy in dismay fled, whilst our men coming to a block house, which made resistance, were checked. During this advance so hopeless did the enemy consider their situation, that they burnt a barrack or store, spiked the guns of a battery, and began their retreat through the village, setting fire to their new frigate the Pike, then on the stocks; and General Brown who commanded, had actually written a proposal of capitulation, which he had appointed a flag of truce to carry to our  
 G Commander,

Commander, whilst a few men were kept in the block house to give an appearance of resistance, in order to obtain better terms. At this period, in an evil hour, Sir George Prevost, mistaking the enemy in running away, with the dust thereby thrown up, for a column of reinforcements arriving; immediately gave orders for a precipitate re embarkation, and then was exhibited, the extraordinary military spectacle of a retreat, I will not say a flight, back to back!

The enemy upon observing this, could hardly believe their senses, but after a little reflection, went to extinguish the fire in the frigate, which they effected (being built of green wood) before she sustained any material injury.

Here ended the second expedition to Sacketts Harbour. Now I would ask in respect to it, whether the burning of a store by the enemy himself, was not an unequivocal proof of an intention to surrender? and further, that if the saving of lives was the only motive for retreat, why the attack was not made the evening before, when the enemy was less prepared to resist? or why was it made without artillery? or finally, why was not the block-house merely masked, or watched by a part of our force, and the rest carried round to burn the ship, and dock yard, &c. all which was practicable almost without the loss of a man, or the possibility of being prevented by the enemy in the block house.

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The above facts about Sacketts harbour were long ago known, and have furnished matter of endless conversation, regret, and mortification. They have been confirmed by military visitors and others, to and from that place since the peace ; and it is now further known, what was previously suspected, that so far from Sacketts being now a second Gibraltar, as was the idea at head quarters, there has been no period when it would not have fallen before 3000 British troops, well commanded and appointed.

It is high time to close this number, and to crave your indulgence until next week, for a continuation.

*VERITAS.*

Montreal, 26th April, 1815.



## [NO. IV.]

*To the Editor of the Montreal Herald*

SIR,

In a former number, I mentioned the armistice concluded after the battle of Queenston, by General Sheaffe, upon a proposal from the enemy. It continued as long as it suited their purpose, and when their preparations in boats, &c. were complete, General Smythe, who had succeeded Van Rensselaer in the command of the American Army, and who even amidst the habitual boasting of officers in their service, was considered so pre-eminent in that faculty, as to acquire the surname of Van Bladder—sent notice to General Sheaffe, that the armistice would cease on the 20th of November 1812. On the 28th of that month, he made an attempt to cross over a large force, and land below Fort Erie, having before landed a party which burnt some houses and barns near that Fort, before they were attacked and repulsed.—General Winder commanded this corps, and was repulsed by Lieut. Colonel Bishopp, Inspecting Field Officer, whose force consisted chiefly of militia.—Smythe, after various demonstrations for renewing the attempt, put his men into winter quarters,

quarters, where they became very sickly, and he was obliged to decamp, to avoid the rage of his own troops and militia.

General Sheaffe entertained an idea of evacuating Fort Erie, which at that time, would have had the most pernicious effect, but it was dropt upon being remonstrated against.

The Upper Canada Militia upon the Niagara line, underwent in the autumn of 1812, fatigues and privations, which did them great honor in supporting, and are scarcely credible.— They were harrassed with duty, from unavoidable necessity, and without necessaries, allowances, or any thing to support them, but the cause in which they were embarked, and the zeal infused into them by their beloved Brock, unhappily then no more.

It has been a common remark, that any notice taken of the Militia of the Upper Province by Sir George, was in a cold forbidding manner, as if extorted by necessity rather than proceeding from choice ; and the sentiment is general in that Province, that he seldom gave them the aid in troops for their defence, that his means were equal to ; and generally when given, was too late, being only put in motion at a great distance, after a disaster was known, and then, as if fearful of sending too many.

His duty, however, extended alike to the protection of both provinces, but we hear of no addresses.

addresses to him from Upper Canada, upon his departure, being either presented, or intended. Yet these who saw and felt the real tug and burthen of the war, are assuredly better judges of his military merits, than the addressers of the Lower Province, who, with very few exceptions, were not in a situation to see or hear a shot fired.

Reverting to naval operations, it is to be observed, that the exertions made by the enemy at Sacketts Harbour, in winter 1812, were such as to enable Commodore Chauncey, after embarking General Dearbon with 2500 troops, exclusive of his crews, to sail in April 1813, with ten armed vessels, which proceeded off York, and on the 27th of April, having landed General Pike with those troops, they defeated General Sheaffe with a very considerable loss, who had with him only about 600 men, half whereof were militia and Indians. The enemy sustained a heavy loss, by the explosion of our powder magazine, in which a slow match was left, when our troops retreated. Had it exploded a few minutes later, the whole of the enemy's troops would have been destroyed. General Pike lost his life by it, and a great many officers and men.

Before our troops retired, they burnt our frigate on the stocks, and naval stores. The *enemy* burnt part of the military buildings, which they completed on their second visit to York in July—and notwithstanding a capitulation granted to  
the

the inhabitants *in April*, after General Sheaffe's retreat, *they* then burnt the civil public buildings, although General Dearborn has had the unblushing effrontery since, deliberately to deny his having done so. The enemy remained until the 2d of May, carrying off the stores and provisions found at York when they re-embarked, and stood over to Niagara, where they landed the troops, and returned to Sacketts Harbour. At this period, they also burnt a Tavern, some distance above York, which had belonged to government, and intended destroying Hatt's Mills, but were prevented by the fear of Indians being in that neighbourhood. Thus, and before at Fort Erie, the enemy, without provocation, commenced that system of burning and destroying public and private buildings, which they prosecuted afterwards upon so many occasions, without compunction or feeling, although they affected to consider the retaliation executed at Washington upon *Public Buildings* only, as an unprecedented barbarity; and in this they were seconded by an unprincipled party in the British Parliament, who seem always alive to the distresses of *an enemy*, but deaf to those of *our own subjects*; as if *they* were unworthy of protection from the ravages of *that enemy*, however atrocious. Nay, it would actually appear, from the speeches in Parliament, that those factious declaimers were afraid that too hard conditions would be imposed at Ghent, upon America, notwithstanding her base declaration of war against us, whilst fighting for the independence of nations.

General



General Sheaffe has been blamed for the unjudicious distribution and management of the troops he had, but it must be evident, that he had not the means of making an effectual resistance, against such a superiority, covered by a fleet; although it is thought that, had he returned, and attacked the enemy immediately after the explosion, their defeat would have been certain. It must excite astonishment, how a frigate and a quantity of stores and provisions could have been placed in a situation so totally unprovided with the means of defence: for of the few regulars that General Sheaffe had, 100 of the 8th Regiment were there by accident, having, at that time, halted on their march from Kingston to Burlington and Fort George.

The American fleet returned *from Niagara* to Sacketts, for a fresh cargo of troops, with which they again sailed, and proceeded to the *former place*, where they were landed, and preparations made for crossing over, to attack Fort George.

On the 27th of May, 1813, (after having on the 24th and 25th cannonaded Fort George from the American Fort, batteries and ships,) the enemy landed a large force at day break, on the British side, under cover of a heavy and destructive fire from their fleet, when having advanced, they were gallantly, but ineffectually met and opposed by some of our troops and militia, who were obliged to give way, and with those left in Fort George, to fall back to Queens-  
ton

ton, after dismantling the Fort, and destroying the stores.

Our loss was considerable, and General Vincent, who commanded our troops, found it necessary to continue his retreat to the head of the Lake, after withdrawing what force we had along the Niagara line, up to Fort Erie inclusive, and concentrating the whole near Burlington heights.

The intermediate country being now at the mercy of the enemy, they pushed forward a large force, under Generals Winder and Chandler, as far as Stoney Creek. Their intention was to attack our united force, wherein they were circumvented, by the gallant and daring manœuvre proposed to General Vincent, which was embraced, of attempting to carry their camp by surprize. This was executed before day break, on the 6th of June, by about 500 of the 8th and 49th Regiments, who attacked about 3500 of the enemy, advantageously posted, who were defeated with the loss of a number of killed, and the two Generals abovementioned with 5 other officers, and about 100 men made prisoners, and four pieces of cannon, with their horses and tumbrils captured. Our troops soon after retired, when the enemy became so panic struck, as to destroy a quantity of provisions and baggage, and retreat precipitately 10 miles to the forty mile creek, where they were joined by General Lewis, with a reinforcement. From that place they also fled, (upon the appearance

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of

of Sir James Yeo, and our fleet, with some troops on board, who cannonaded and summoned them) leaving their tents standing, and hardly halted until they reached Fort George.

Sir James took and destroyed many of their boats with provisions, but unfortunately our numbers were too small to take advantage of this panic, else the enemy might have been expelled to their own side.

Commodore Chauncey hearing of the attack upon Sacket's Harbour, had returned there with his fleet, where he remained until the end of July, when the Pike was ready. In the intermediate time, Sir Jas. Yeo was active in scouring the shore of the lake, having taken several small vessels of the enemy with provisions and stores, besides doing them other injury: and keeping open the communication with our troops at the head of Lake Ontario.

Our troops as they got reinforced, advanced towards the enemy, and on the 24th of June, the American Colonel Boersteler, with about 500 men and 2 field pieces, who had marched into the country, were attacked by a body of Indians, and so hard pressed by them, as to be compelled to surrender, upon the appearance of Lieut. Fitzgibbon, and a few men of the 49th Regt.

Our troops, in the summer of 1813, took up a position from St David to the four mile creek, and were commanded by General DE ROTTEN-

BURG,

BURG, who joined them from Lower Canada, and relieved General Sheaffe, as President of the Upper Province, and Senior officer upon the Staff there.

On the 4th of July, 1813, Lt. Col. Clark of the militia, went over with a small force to Fort Schlosser, destroyed that post, and brought off some provisions and arms. On the 11th of same month, Lt. Colonels Bishopp and Clark crossed to Black Rock, with 240 men, defeated the guard there, and brought off several boats with stores and provisions, and 3 field pieces, and destroyed the store houses and barracks, with some cannon and a vessel. Unfortunately however, they remained too long, and were attacked on coming away, by a fresh party of the enemy, and a body of Indians in their interest, whereby we suffered some loss, which was greatly aggravated by the gallant Colonel Bishopp, receiving three wounds, which occasioned his death, and deprived the service of a promising young officer, of most amiable private character. He was a great favourite with the Militia, and greatly lamented by them.

Excepting these excursions, nothing of moment happened in the centre division, until joined by Sir George for a few days, when a grand demonstration against Fort George was displayed, by marching the army up the hill, and down again, which resulted in satisfying him, that nothing could be done to dislodge the enemy.

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In the month of July 1813, the Growler and Eagle, which had been so gallantly captured on the 3d of June, near Isle aux Noix, were manned by seamen from a sloop of war at Quebec, commanded by Capt. Everard, who came up himself with his officers and men, when being distributed in those vessels, he took the command of one, and Capt. Pring, of the Royal Navy, who had come with Captain Barclay, and other officers, in April from Halifax, took the command of the other. These vessels and some gun boats accompanied Col. J. Murray, Inspecting field Officer, with a small military force in batteaux, which proceeding to Plattsburgh, burnt the stores and barracks at Champlain, at Saranack, (*since rendered so famous,*) and at Swanton, after which they returned. Our armed vessels looked into Burlington, where the enemy had moored theirs so close under a battery, as not to be got at.

This service was performed without loss, and furnished a proof of what zeal, intelligence, and activity, when well directed, are capable of; besides giving a pledge of what might be expected at a future day, from the services of that valuable officer, should an opportunity be placed in his power. This pledge he afterwards well redeemed at Niagara.

On the 31st of July, Com: Chauncey (the Pike being now equipped) with 12 sail, appeared off York, and landed a second time, when he burnt the remaining barracks, stores, and wood-  
Yard.

Yard. On re-embarking, he proceeded to the head of Lake Ontario and landed near Burlington heights, with a view of carrying that post, but Major Maule with his small force presented so bold a countenance, and Lt. Col. Battersby with part of the Glengary Regt. being on the march to support him, the enemy gave up the attempt, and stood over to Niagara.

Sir James Yeo having equipped another brig, sailed from Kingston on the 31st of July with six sail, and meeting the enemy with 11 sail, off the 12 mile Creek above Niagara, on the 10th of August 1813, a partial action ensued, which ended in our capturing the Julia and Growler of two guns and 40 men each, whereupon Chauncey having the wind in his favor, took shelter under the guns of Fort Niagara. The enemy had lost the night before, the Scourge of 10 and Hamilton of 9 guns, which overfet in a squall, and the whole of their crews, with the exception of a few, perished.

Both fleets soon after came down the Lake, and that of the enemy on seeing ours, went into Sackett's Harbour on the 18th of Aug. but sailed again the same day or the following. Ours entered Kingston Harbour, and after embarking some heavy artillery for our army on the Niagara line, again proceeded up the Lake on the 20th of August.

Nothing of moment happened between the fleets until 20th Sept. when the American, which  
had

had left Niagara the day before, discovered ours off York, and an action began, which partially continued two hours, wherein our ships had suffered so much in their masts, as to induce Sir James Yeo to push for Burlington heights, off which he anchored, it blowing strong. The Wolfe, Sir James' ship, lost her main and mizen topmasts in the action, besides receiving other damage, and was preserved by a masterly and gallant manœuvre of Captain Mulcaster in the Royal George, who laid his ship between her and the Pike in such a position as to rake the latter, disable her, and cover the retreat, of our squadron. The Pike lost many killed and wounded, especially by the bursting of some of her own guns. Had Chauncey attacked us at our anchorage with determined resolution, our situation would have been very perilous, and might have had a fatal termination.

On the 1st of Oct. the enemy's fleet returned to their anchorage off Niagara, but failed down the Lake on the 2d or the 5th, the Pike and Sylph being a head, fell in with 5 of our small Schooners and a sloop, employed for the conveyance of provisions and stores, which had imprudently left York to return to Kingston, when by injudiciously keeping together and standing out into the lake, instead of each making the best of his way along shore, the schooners were captured and carried into Sackett's Harbour, with above 300 men in all on board, including the crews and flank companies of De Watteville's



Watteville's Regt. The sloop ran ashore and was destroyed, one schooner carried 2 guns, and the others one each.

It is time for the present to quit Ontario, and see what was passing on Lake Erie and its neighbourhood.

Colonel Proctor commanding the Right Division of the army at Detroit, having received information, that an American corps of upwards of 1000 men, under General Winchester, had reached French Town, River Raisin, 26 miles from Detroit; and also learning, that General Harrison with another corps, was on the march to join, did not hesitate to adopt the bold resolution (although acting under orders of Sir George's usual defensive description) of anticipating the enemy, by attacking Winchester's force before the other could form a junction. Accordingly Colonel Proctor marched to execute this determination with some regulars, militia, part of the Marine Department, and a body of Indians under the Chief Roundhead, and on the 22d of January 1813, at day break, made so bold an attack upon Winchester's division, as completely to defeat it, taking the General, a Colonel, and many other officers, with about 500 prisoners including wounded, and killed in the action and pursuit, above 400—about 100 escaped. Colonel Proctor and our troops displayed equal humanity as bravery in their exertions to save the vanquished enemy from the retaliation of the Indians, whose tribes  
had



had on former occasions suffered so severely from American cruelty. Our loss was about 180 killed and wounded, exclusive of Indians.

The Americans having afterwards established themselves at the rapids of the Miamis of the Lake, Colonel, now General Proctor, again went to attempt to dislodge them from their fort, when on the 5th May 1813 (whilst carrying on the siege) a body of about 1500 of the enemy under a General Clay, having descended the River in 30 large boats, with a view to form a junction with their comrades in the fort, who co-operating with them, they attacked our positions on both sides of that river, and succeeded in carrying our batteries on the West side, the flankers of the 41st regiment having only time to spike the guns. About 150 of the 41st with a fresh band of Indians sent to recover the guns and battery, turned the fate of the day by a gallant effort, in which the Indians were highly conspicuous. The guns were retaken and about 550 of the enemy's descending force made prisoners. The remainder gained the fort.

The loss in killed and wounded was severe on both sides. Some of the 41st had been taken when the battery was carried by the enemy, but were exchanged after the action was over. General Proctor however was finally obliged to raise the siege and return to Detroit, as the Indians, according to their custom after success,  
retire

entire to enjoy the plunder they had obtained from the captured boats of the enemy.

Towards the end of July 1813, General Proctor made an attempt with about 400 troops, and a body of Indians upon Fort Meigs, at Sandusky, defended by a Major Croghan; which being cannonaded without effect for some days, was on the 2d of August attempted to be carried by assault, by a party of the 41st, who behaved gallantly, but were repulsed with the loss of Lt. Col. Short and a Lt. killed, and about 90 killed and wounded.

It has been said that there was a want of concert among, and co-operation by the Indians on this occasion, but the fact is, that the attack of fortified posts, is neither adapted to their arms, nor to their mode of warfare.

As a general principle, we have erred greatly in expecting from Indians, the aid that regular discipline can alone supply. It has been too common for officers of the line to undervalue them on this account; but it is just as absurd to expect them to change their habits, and act the part of disciplined troops, as it would be to expect, that our best battalions, would go into the woods without baggage, artillery and provisions, and trust to their fusees alone for subsistence and for the attack of the enemy. Each are excellent when in their proper element, but Indian warriors in a settled country are like fish out of the water. We restrain them from their

own mode of warfare, without being able to get them to adopt ours ; so that in such situations they are (as in the case of the Indians who retreated to Ancaster and Burlington) a burden instead of a benefit ; but whilst we held Detroit and the command of Lake Erie, their services were most valuable, as may be seen from the repeated efforts and heavy losses which it cost the enemy to dislodge us, and which they never could have effected, if we had retained the naval superiority of that Lake.

Whilst upon the subject of the Indians, I cannot but notice the concluding paragraph of a " circular to all officers in command of posts," dated at Montreal 7th Dec. 1812, signed by the Adjutant General, and published in the Quebec Gazette of 8th April 1813, in what is called a "*note dedicated to His Excellency James Madison, Esquire*." This is a long labored demi-official production, intended to refute the accusations made by him and other Americans, about pretended cruelties committed by the Indians, and our alledged participation therein.

Now as Madison and others well knew that they were asserting what was false, and did so for political purposes, there was just about as much wisdom, in the reasoning in this famous note, as in the attempt once made to wash a blackamoor white. What a useless waste of time it is to argue with an intentional Liar, because you can never make a convert of him. The  
folly



folly however of this note, I should have passed over, but for its mischievous tendency at the time in regard to the Indians, as the concluding paragraph runs thus ; " His Excellency disapproves of any co-operation with the Indians not connected with the system of defence of the Province," doubtless the wise defensive system laid down by his Excellency for the guidance of those officers ; and in the extract of a letter to General Sheaffe contained in the same note, will be found these words, " Sir George Prevost is much averse to allowing the regular troops to be engaged with the Indians in offensive operations," he might have said with or without them.

Now what can this mean. In plain English simply this.—Get all the aid you can from the Indians for our purposes, but take especial care, and I strictly enjoin one and all of you, that if they shall be retaliated upon by the enemy for affording us this aid, and in consequence get their villages and fields of corn destroyed, (as actually happened) and their wives and children thereby threatened with starvation, as also themselves with extermination, you are upon no accounts to send a man to assist in their defence, because it would offend His Excellency James Madison Esq. and be liable to misinterpretation.

The impropriety of issuing such an order is manifest, but the indiscretion of publishing it in the Quebec Gazette, whereby it might have got to the ears of the Indians, was extreme; for



it risked the cutting up of Indian attachment to us by the root, and effectually palsying their efforts for our defence, if not to occasion the turning of their arms against us. Who could expect Indian aid upon such terms ?

This however, is not the only order given, that if it had been literally executed, might have lost the country, as will be seen by and bye ; and we are certainly under the strongest obligations to those officers, who under a strong sense of duty and zeal, studying only the good of the service whereon they were employed, ventured upon the heavy responsibility of evading orders, that their conviction led them to feel, would be productive of ruinous consequences. I have already observed that the only armed vessel the enemy had on lake Erie\* was captured by General Brock at Detroit in August 1812, and yet in 1813 they had built and equipped such a force as to capture the whole of our fleet there, although most gallantly defended.

It was my intention to have comprised in this number, the gross neglects respecting Lake Erie and the naval catastrophe thereon ; but as I find that cannot be done without extending this to an inconvenient length for your paper, I must defer it to my next.

VERITAS.

\* In the conclusion of the Editorial paragraph of Quebec Gazette 2d September 1813, will be seen this circumstance forcibly noticed, as also that at the declaration of war, the enemy had only the Oneida upon Lake Ontario; now how he could forget this on manufacturing *The Quebec Address to Sir George*, is rather strange ; unless he counted upon the bad memories of his readers.

If instead of acting the part of the Waggoner and Hercules, he (Sir George) had put his own shoulder immediately to the wheel of Lake defence, instead of calling out at the eleventh hour for aid from Great Britain, at 3000 miles distance, we should have got out of the slough of Lake inferiority, or rather we should never have got into it.

## [NO. V.]

*To the Editor of the Montreal Herald*

SIR,

MY last number having closed without entering into the neglects respecting Lake Erie, I proceed to remark, that ignorance of the *efforts* made by the enemy on that lake whilst in *their progress*, cannot be pretended; for independent of the repeated representations made by General Proctor and Captain Barclay, and the information that was, or might have been had, through other attainable channels of intelligence, the American newspapers furnished sufficient, being filled with the preparations making at Erie (Presqu' Isle). The Aurora of 29th June 1813, says, "The new floops of war lately built at Erie are noble vessels, they are of the size of the Wasp and Hornet, each mounting eighteen 32 lb. carronades, and two long 12's. One is called the Lawrence, the other the Niagara." Again, Albany, July 1st, a letter from Erie, dated 20th June, 1813, mentions that "the Queen Charlotte and a British schooner are on the lake, and Capt. Perry has brought 5 ves-

vessels from Buffalo, which luckily escaped them in a fog. We have now 11 vessels, two of which will carry 20 guns each." And Pittsburgh, July 21st—Extract of a letter from a gentleman at Erie, 19th inst. "Our town is all bustle; 5 of the enemy's vessels are now within a mile and a half of the town; they appear full of men, and if they should attempt a landing, I fear much, our militia, from their want of discipline, would make a very poor fight; Commodore Perry has not men sufficient for a brig." Commodore Perry writes to the secretary of the navy, outside Erie bar, 4th August 1813—"I have great pleasure in informing you, that I have succeeded in getting over the bar the United States' vessels the Lawrence, Niagara, Caledonia, Ariel, Scorpion, Somers, Tigress, and Porcupine. The enemy have been in sight all day, and are now about four leagues from us; we shall sail in pursuit of them at three to-morrow morning."

Now what excuse can there be for Sir George in having quietly suffered all this to pass in an open port, protected neither by troops nor fortifications up to Aug. 1813. Why did he not direct the means of attack upon that place, for the destruction of those vessels to be furnished, whilst we commanded Lake Erie from the centre division, which was lying inactive. Instead of this, he seems to have been blind to, or regardless of the increasing means of destruction of our naval force upon that lake, as not an attempt

tempt was made to destroy the one or save the other.

At the period when Com. Perry wrote as above, the *Detroit*, our largest vessel, was not equipped; and Capt. Barclay seeing the American force, very properly returned into port to get her ready. He made astonishing exertions with so great a deficiency of means, for he had neither proper guns, stores, nor seamen. To supply the former, Amherstburg was dismantled of its cannon and metal of eight different calibres thereby furnished: the like never happened before to a vessel of one deck; and every seaman knows the ruinous consequence of such a motley mixture of guns. Some of those guns although mounted upon carriages, were rather of the size of swivels, being 2 and 4 pounders; but unfortunately although inefficient as to defence or attack, they increased our nominal force and gave to the enemy an opportunity of swelling our relative strength, without wounding their tender consciences, as they gave the number of guns, omitting their size. The crews of all our vessels were of a like motley composition, and not fifty British seamen were distributed amongst the whole. The rest were troops, landmen, lake-sailors, and militia; as to stores and equipment of all kinds, every succedaneum was obliged to be employed in defect of what was proper.

- It may be asked who is, or are to blame for this?



this? I answer, both Sir George and Sir James. The former then commanded both services, and furnished, or ought to have furnished, the means, as moreover holding the purse strings of expenditure; and the latter was the naval chief commander upon the lakes, but seemed to have forgotten that he was responsible for lake Erie—each has much to answer for respecting it.

Seamen, unquestionably, were procurable at Quebec, either by energetic, voluntary, or compulsive means, if applied in due season, to which an embargo would have greatly contributed, and might have been employed without commercial injury. It is asserted, that the late Capt. Kempt officially proposed to Head Quarters in June 1813, a plan for securing a supply of seamen for the lakes, but it was not listened to. It is also known, that he, and the commander of a sloop of war, when the capture of the Growler and Eagle upon Lake Champlain was heard of, brought up that month, upon being applied to, a number of volunteer officers and seamen from that sloop and transports, who went to Isle aux Noix to man *those captured vessels*, for the purpose of proceeding upon some service, along with troops upon that Lake, but they not being ready, the whole returned, until the like enterprize was resumed by Col. Murray and Capt. Everard as before mentioned. The same summer, Capt. M'Culloch of the Royal navy, an *Agent for Transports*, carried up a number of volunteer seamen therefrom, who served upon

upon Lake Ontario, until November, when they returned to Quebec.

Can it be possible to adduce stronger proof of what was practicable in respect to manning our Lake Erie squadron, (had proper precautions been taken in due time) than the facts just mentioned.

But independent of these resources, what good reason can be offered for *Sir James' conduct* in sending up Capt. Barclay to that Lake with a handful of men, which were increased afterwards by so small a number, and those the refuse of the Ontario crews ; his own ships are said to have been overmanned, and even if not so the seamen spared could have been replaced from below, whilst the service upon Lake Erie was going on.

I blame not, but on the contrary applaud, Sir James' prudence in acting on Lake Ontario upon the defensive, against such a superiority of force, as Com. Chauncey had acquired, as he doubtless saved Upper Canada thereby ; but when he determined upon defensive operations, the motive was the stronger for affording to Captain Barclay the certainty of a victory through naval means upon Lake Erie, especially when he saw that nothing was to be attempted by a land force, for the destruction of the enemy's increasing fleet at Erie.

Had Capt. Barclay been furnished with a  
I sufficient

sufficient number of seamen for the vessels he had, their cannot be a doubt, that even with the troops furnished him by General Proctor, the American Erie squadron would have been destroyed.

Yet under all these marked neglects by Sir George, we find him (as seems to have been a common practice with him in respect to the navy, although so pointedly averse to risking any thing himself, or to permitting others to run any risk by land) urging Captain Barclay to meet the enemy, as will appear by the letters read at General Proctor's trial, which I give merely from memory, but were in substance as follows, viz : In that from Sir George Prevost to General Proctor, in August 1813, he says, "the experience obtained by Sir James Yeo, respecting a fleet infinitely superior to the one under his command, will satisfy Captain Barclay, that he has only to *dare*," (alas, how little did the writer practise what he thus preached) "and the enemy will be discomfited," and a few days after, the Military Secretary writes, "His Excellency trusts that on the arrival of the seamen (meaning the handful sent up) Capt. Barclay will be able to make his appearance on the Lake to meet the enemy." What inconsistency of conduct in *such a character*, to use *such language* to *such men*, for it is well known, that neither Sir James Yeo, Captain Barclay, nor Capt. Downie wanted such stimuli to do their duty; their personal temperament, and the state of their armaments, seemed rather to require the suggestion of caution, in their proceedings.

The



The strange neglect of the Commissary on the Niagara line, who by an ill judged economy, \* that has since cost us so dear, lost the opportunity of provisioning the right division, when practicable, which added to the above stimulants, and conjoined with Capt. Barclay's innate enterprize and zeal, led him to sail on the 9th of Sept. 1813, from Amherstburg, in the Detroit of 18 guns, with the Queen Charlotte of same number, so inadequately equipped and prepared, along with the Lady Prevost of 14, Hunter 8, Little Belt 2; and also a small tender, the Chippeway of 1. The enemy had three large brigs, each superior to the largest of our squadron, and 6 smaller vessels.

The Commanders of the hostile fleets were aware of the importance of the stake for which they had to contend, and each did it ample justice. They got sight of each other on the morning of the 10th Sept. and by a kind of simultaneous consent, resolved to meet, and try the issue. The lake was undulated by a gentle breeze, which at first favored us, but it veered

NOTE \* This Gentleman afterwards when too late, paid one third more for flour, than he could have had it at in good season. Economy and inactivity at the commencement of a war, invariably lead to a waste of blood and treasure during its progress: never was this truism more completely exemplified, than in the practice of Sir George, in the late war. At the outset penurious to an extreme in every point of preparation for active operations; and inactive to a degree of torpidity, as if the enemy, by our forbearance, and by yielding to them the point of honor, could have been coaxed into peace; we have seen the expenditure of treasure and of life thereby quintupled. During the whole of the war, secret service money was so miserably applied, that our want of intelligence was proverbial. A contrary system might have produced real (instead of fictitious) savings to an immense amount.



round before the fleets came to action, and gave the enemy an opportunity of choosing their distance, which they did, so as to give full effect to their superiority in long guns, and to lessen the effect of our carronades.

They had thus in their favor the superiority of heavy metal ; of size and number of vessels, which discharged at each broadside 340 lbs. of balls beyond ours ; of number of regular bred seamen, and of general physical strength ; the excess of number of vessels, enabled them to have a reserve ; a point of infinite moment.

In our favor, we had nought, to contend against such odds, but the innate zeal and courage of our officers and men, the remembrance of former deeds, and the renown to be acquired in the event of success ; whilst the forlorn necessity of the risk run, would acquit them of dishonor, if defeat should ensue.

The fleets began to engage a quarter before noon, and at half past three the action ceased by our discomfiture. So gallantly did our inferior force maintain the fight, under the disadvantage of a distance chosen by the enemy, that Com. Perry was obliged to quit the Lawrence, which soon after surrendered, but not a boat, an officer, nor a seamen had the Detroit left whereby to be able to take possession. The *commodore* removed his broad pendant to the Niagara, which had kept aloof hitherto in the contest, when observing an opportunity for retrieval

al of the day, he carried down that vessel, and the reserve gun vessels, to make a fresh attack upon our disabled line ; unfortunately at this moment, the Queen Charlotte in wearing, in order to bring her other side to bear, came round upon the wrong tack, and nearing the Detroit, they (by that power of attraction incident to floating bodies, and which there was not physical strength remaining in either of our vessels, sufficient to counteract,) fell on board each other, and in this disabled situation becoming an unmanageable and inert mass, were attacked by the above said fresh force of the enemy, and compelled to strike.

From this detail, it will be obvious, that under all our disadvantages, the victory was snatched from us by that unprecedented accident of being unable to take possession of the Lawrence when she struck, and the equally extraordinary fatality of our loss falling so heavily upon the few naval officers and seamen that we had ; for the 1st and 2d in command of each vessel were killed or wounded, and that list otherwise distressingly numerous.

The gallant Barclay might say with Francis the 1st, after the battle of Pavia, " that he had lost all but his honor," for it was a contest supported by him in a style worthy of one who had served under the immortal Nelson, as he had done. Well might his appearance on his trial, draw tears from his Court Martial, mutilated as he

he was by the loss of one arm, on a former occasion ; and the other requiring artificial support to be of any use, by reason of a grape shot through the shoulder blade, which grazed his side, besides receiving several other flesh wounds in the battle of 10th September.

But what seaman or foldier is there, who would not prefer such mutilation, to the spurious honours which adulation confers, for the pretended saving of lives by the retreats of Sacketts Harbour and Plattsburg, those distressing monuments of indecision.

The consequences of the *loss of that fleet* were, as was to be expected, very disastrous indeed, it having reduced us to the necessity of abandoning all our positions beyond Lake Erie, and therewith risking the loss of Indian friendship, which indeed was threatened by them, with a view to induce us still to make a stand somewhere in that quarter. The retreat commenced from Sandwich on the 24th of September, 1813, after finally dismantling the forts of Amherstburg and Detroit (already stripped of their artillery for our fleet,) and destroying the public buildings and stores. Our remaining force consisted probably of about 850 men, and 1200 to 1500 Indians, who still adhered to us in adversity. The whole took the route of the *River Thames*, followed by boats with some provisions stores and baggage.

The enemy, under General Harrison, appeared



peared off Amherstburg on the 26th, and next day proceeding by water to that river; they, on reaching it, landed about 4500 men, or perhaps more, who being accompanied by water by some gun boats, they ascended the Thames in the tract of General Proctor's corps, the rear guard whereof with the boats, stores and baggage, were come up with, and captured on the 4th of October. On the 5th, they also came up with the main body, near the Moravian village, whom they defeated, taking about 600 prisoners. General Proctor, with some officers and men, to the number of about 250 in all, first and last, escaped, and got to Ancaster.

The Indians made a more successful stand at another point, having obliged part of the enemy opposed to them to give way, whom they harried in their return to Detroit; but losing their great Chief, the celebrated Tecumseth, who fell like a Hero in the field of battle, and learning the fate of our troops, a large body of them retired in the same direction, and also assembled at Ancaster.

The body of Tecumseth having fallen into the hands of the Americans, it was literally in part flayed by them, with a ferocity disgraceful to the name of soldiers and christians; but it is an established fact, that the back settlers of Kentucky, &c. are far more savage and cruel, than those they affect to denominate savages.

I give no opinion about General Proctor's retreat



treat and action, as he has been tried by his Peers, who will pass judgment according to evidence, but his conduct has been harshly spoken of, and especially in the general order of 24th November 1813, wherethere is a severity of reproof, that no officer, however high in rank, could be entitled to give to a General Officer, previous to any regular investigation; at least where his own military feats were either unheard of, or of trifling import. Yet, such is the limited nature of human foresight, that the language of that general order, which certainly in point of literary composition, was ably written, might, without a forced construction, be made to apply to Sir George's own case in September 1814.

The misfortune that thus befel the right division, had like to have proved fatal to the centre division. General Vincent, panic struck, retreated from St. David, (General De Rottenburg having some time before gone down to Kingston,) towards Burlington, after destroying quantities of stores, provisions, and Indian goods, and the post at Long Point was called in with precipitation, as if Harrison and his men could have come through the intermediate wilderness unimpeded, or without their advance, if attempted, being previously ascertained.

The infection of this panic extended to Head Quarters, from whence orders issued for the evacuation of all our posts beyond Kingston, and for the retreat of the troops to that place, which  
from

from a paragraph in an Albany paper, appeared to be known to the enemy, as soon or sooner, than to General Vincent at Burlington.

The enemy confiding in the accuracy of their information, after advancing parties upon the route towards Burlington, and committing various ravages, as also after making demonstrations at Niagara to convey under cover of their fleet a body of troops by boats into our rear, moved the principal part of their force suddenly down the lake to Sacket's harbor, the American Genl. there declaring, that he was not to be duped by the appearance of our building barracks at Burlington, as he knew the orders which had been given for the retreat of the British troops in that quarter, and that the advanced guard had in consequence already proceeded to York.

The execution of those orders for retreat was repeatedly urged from below, and at last in so peremptory a manner, that they would have been carried into effect, had not the strong and zealous remonstrances of some officers of rank, interposed to prevent a measure so pregnant with ruin. It will scarcely be believed, but is not the less true, that in those orders, no notice was taken either of the sick, of which there was then a large number with the army, and a larger at York, nor of the inhabitants or Indians, neither was the depot of provisions and stores deemed worthy of notice, although the posts of Burlington, York, and Kingston, depended principally on that depot for supplies.

In addition to those gloomy considerations, the season of the year, and state of the roads presented insurmountable obstacles to the execution of those orders, without the sacrifice of all the ordnance, ammunition, stores, and baggage of every description.

And admitting that one half of the effective regular force could have reached Kingston, which was by no means probable, what was to have become of the civil officers of Government, and their families, with all the other loyal inhabitants resident in the District to be evacuated.

Supposing that those also could have reached Kingston, and that the Indians would have allowed them to depart, (the Indians however in such case, on seeing themselves deceived and abandoned to their fate, would more probably, from the impulse of despair, have plundered, burnt and destroyed every thing within their reach) what must have been the consequence? when it is well known that the garrison of Kingston, about that time, had *only seven day's provision in store*, and that supplies were forwarded thereto from Burlington and York at an immense expence and risk.

Under such circumstances, Kingston must have been also abandoned, for want of subsistence, and the ships, stores, and public buildings destroyed or left to the enemy.

A retreat from thence to Montreal, under an accumulation of distress and difficulty augmenting



ing at every step from the state of the roads, and the number of wretched inhabitants compelled to fly from fear of the enemy, and a dread of the exasperated Indians, would have produced horrors, sufficient to appal the stoutest minds.

To all this may be added, the certainty that a large force of the enemy would have been brought to hang upon the flanks and rear of such a cavalcade, (for an army it could not have been called) so that such a panic would have been created in the country, as to have rendered resistance to the descent of the enemy to Montreal unavailing.

None but those who were directed to carry those orders into execution, and who in consequence had the subject pressed upon their consideration under all its direful bearings, can form a proper estimate of the heart rending scene that such a retreat would have presented to view.

We therefore owe a debt of gratitude and regard of no common magnitude, to those officers, who at their own responsibility and risk, remonstrated with effect, against the fatal measure; and not only prevented the calamities which would have been consequent thereupon, but became ultimately the cause of clearing that country of the enemy, by the recapture of Fort George, and capture of Fort Niagara, with all their happy results.

And yet the man who gave the orders aforesaid



said, is addressed as the saviour of the Canadas. It may be truly said, that they have been saved in spite of his blunders, and defect of exertion.

*VERITAS.*

Montreal, 9th May, 1815.

## [NO. VI.]

*To the Editor of the Montreal Herald*

SIR,

In my last number, I stated, that at one time, in autumn, 1813, our troops at Kingston had not seven days subsistence. Those at Prescott or Fort Wellington, were nearly in a similar situation.

This was in a great measure, owing to a combination of persons, either in the pay of Madison, or gratuitously promoting his service. They effected their purpose partly by their own example, and by operating upon the avarice of the well affected, by persuading them to withhold supplies in order to get excessive prices. This was the ostensible pretext, but the real motive was to disconcert our military operations, by starving the troops, at the time of the expected invasion, by the force collecting at Sackett's Harbour.

To counteract this nefarious plot, it became indispensably necessary for General De Rottenburg, then President of Upper Canada, to proclaim a modified Martial Law ; and in consequence, provisions and forage were taken from the Farmers, without their consent ; but at very liberal

liberal and indeed very high prices, fixed by the Magistrates; the one half of which they would now be happy to get. Many who were duped by the arts of the disaffected, now feel compunction and sorrow at their folly.

This measure of General De Rottenburg created complaints, which were artfully laid hold of by a Junto of disaffected persons, but self styled patriots, who seeing their object likely to be defeated by this prompt and decided measure, became furious in their denunciations against the military in general, but especially General De Rottenburg and Lieutenant Colonel Pearson, who then commanded at Prescott.

The Chief of this Junto, was a man who had quitted Prescott the moment he heard of war being declared, and came to reside at Montreal, either from cowardice, or as considering it to afford a wider field for exertions favorable to the views of the enemy. He began his career by libelling every class in this community, and afterwards attacked the officers abovesaid, for doing their duty, in a periodical essay, under the signature of the "Anti-Jacobin," which was at first published in the Courant, but the Editor getting alarmed, at the abusive matter it contained; the work was taken up by a wretched Paper called the Spectateur, that had commenced operations upon a congenial plan.

This paper yet continues, but is dwindling into deserved insignificance. The Anti-Jacobin

bin \* has some time dropped his signature, but occasionally deigns to enlighten his fellow subjects with the fruits of his brain, under occasional signatures, or under the mask of editorial remarks.

It would occupy too large a space, to enter into a formal discussion of the question about the right of declaring Martial Law, and therefore I shall content myself with observing, that to argue that such a power can in *no case be exercised, without a previous Legislative Act*, is as absurd as to say, that an individual has not the right of self preservation if attacked, but must, instead of defending himself, apply to the civil magistrate *for protection*, and consequently risk *being destroyed* before he can obtain *that protection*.

General laws apply to ordinary cases, but there are cases that require extraordinary and prompt remedies. Rebellion or invasion assuredly come within the latter class, and during the existence of either of them, or absolute danger thereof, martial-law may be constitutionally proclaimed by the Sovereign or his Representative ; and to do so, may be as indispensable to the safety of the state, as the instant application of personal force to the preservation of an individual when attacked.

\* The part of this number which relates to Martial-Law, and the plan for starving the troops in Upper Canada, was written before I saw the letter in the last Herald, sent from Leeds ; but it comes in as a most powerful illustration of my doctrine thereon.

That



That the application of the power abovesaid was not made upon a trivial occasion, is manifest ; for the question was reduced to this— Shall the army be starved at the time the enemy is known to be prepared for, and determined upon immediate invasion ? or shall an authority be exercised to defeat the plots of the disaffected, and thereby save the Province against that invasion ? *So certainly* will every honest and loyal man say *yes*, to the second part of the question, that I venture to assert, that in such a predicament had the officer at the head of the Government, been so neglectful of his duty, as to be dismayed into inaction, by democratic clamour or threats, he would have deserved condign punishment.

General De Rottenburg, I conceive, was perfectly *justified* in what he did, from the necessity of the case, and Lieutenant Colonel Pearson in obeying his orders, was *also so* ; and I have been astonished to learn, that Sir George Prevost, upon finding that the Lieut. Colonel was daily abused and threatened with prosecutions and persecutions by the disaffected Junto, for his zeal in executing his orders about subsisting the troops, coolly observed, that if he had got into a scrape, let him get out of it the best way he can. Sir George's duty was to have enquired whether the Lieutenant Colonel had acted from corrupt motives, or from zeal in a necessary measure, and if the latter, it was incumbent upon the Commander of the Forces to have supported him.

I have a right to ascribe the conduct of the Junta to disaffection; for what good subject, when the enemy was at the door, would have taken measures to palsy our means of defence. To give aid to the enemy, is treason, and what more efficient aid could be given, than what I have mentioned. It only wanted proof of a correspondence with the enemy, respecting those proceedings, to have made those concerned therein, punishable for High Treason.

The enemy had been for some months collecting a force at Plattsburg for a second invasion of Lower-Canada, and in September advanced to the frontier, as if intending at one time, to penetrate by Odell-Town, and at another by the Chateaugay and Salmon Rivers. The Sedentary Militia to the south of the St. Lawrence, for a considerable way down, were then called out to aid the regular troops and embodied militia in repelling the attempt. The enemy after several demonstrations and countermarches, entered by the Chateaugay country, and having advanced under General Hampton, with nearly 8000 men, on the 26th of Oct. 1813, attacked our advanced post, consisting of about 300 men, under the immediate command of Lieutenant Colonel De Salaberry, who had chosen his ground and strengthened it by abatis, with such judgment, and defended it with such spirit, as to repulse, according to the General Order on the occasion, a body of above twenty times their number. The force under

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the Lieut. Col. was chiefly Canadians, and they acquitted themselves in a manner that does him, the other officers, and them, great credit.

The loss we sustained was trifling, but that of the enemy pretty severe, and retreating without renewing their attack, they returned to Plattsburg. Upon this, a question arises, which instead of being favorable to Sir George's claim to the merit of calling forth the energies of the population, rather proves that he repressed those energies ; because we know the fact, that the enemy were defeated, (whether they had as many in action as alledged, or not ; ) and then allowed quietly to retire without pursuit : why were they not followed up, by the very large body of other militia and regular troops in that quarter ? The not following them up was an insult to the other troops and militia, after what 300 *only* had done.

Did Sir George want confidence in himself, or in them, or from what other cause did so strange a neglect proceed ? If his other force was not within supporting or striking distance, what can be said of his military talents ? and why was he so deficient in intelligence of the enemy's movements, as not to have had a body concentrated and ready on the instant to take advantage of this success ? In short I am bewildered on the occasion, if he really believed to the extent of what he published, (as also at the order issued on the 4th of November, for the dismissal



dismissal of the Sedentary Militia on the south side, in consequence of which some of them, on the 7th or 8th had begun their march homeward, when next day they had to be counter-marched, to repel another invasion from a different quarter. However, such was the fact.

The American expedition collected at Sackett's Harbour, under General Wilkinson, becoming formidable in October, and Kingston being supposed to be its object, both fleets had come down the Lake,—Ours entered Kingston Harbour, and there remained, when part of the crews were distributed into gun-boats, under the command of Captain Mulcaster, of the Royal Navy, to watch the enemy's movements. The invading army left Sackett's Harbour in that month, in above 200 Durham boats, gun-boats, and small craft, containing ten thousand men of all descriptions, with a large train of artillery, and abundance of stores. Meeting with stormy weather, after sailing, they suffered loss, and rendezvoused at Grenadier Island, where they remained exposed to very bad weather, in a rainy season, until the 3d Nov. 1813, when they again sailed, and proceeded down. On the 7th at night, (notwithstanding they had been on a former day cannonaded by Captain Mulcaster's flotilla) their boats and craft passed Prescott, close to the American shore, most of the troops having landed above, and marched round, to avoid the expected cannonade from Fort Wellington.

On



On the 8th, 5000 men under General Boyd passed over at Point Iroquois to the Canada side, 15 miles below Prescott, where he was joined by 300 American Dragoons, who had crossed at Hamilton; General Wilkinson with their remaining force being then in their boats. When it was found that their object was not Kingston, but Lower Canada, after their departure from Grenadier Island, Lt. Colonel Morrison was sent from Kingston with the 49th and 89th Regiments, which joined our flotilla of gun-boats, and proceeding down, were reinforced as they passed Fort Wellington, with a part of its garrison, under Lieutenant Colonel Pearson; the 49th was commanded by Lieutenant Col. Plenderleath, all of them distinguished officers. Upon approaching the enemy, our force landed and overtook them on the 9th, after which, their rear was so harried as to determine Gen. Boyd to retrograde with 4000 men on the 11th, and attack us, whilst General Brown, with the rest of their disembarked troops, marched on. Lieutenant Colonel Morrison observing this, retired until he came to a position selected on his way down, in case of such an event, where he determined to receive their attack. A battle ensued, and the enemy were beaten in a masterly manner, with a severe loss in killed and wounded, and 400 men captured with a field piece.

Colonel Morrison and the other officers and men

men under his command, had uncommon merit in conquering under such a disproportion of force, as he had in all but 800 men ; and the modest style in which he related the action, enhanced that merit when put in contrast with the bombast of the enemy. Captain Mulcaster and his gun-boats most zealously co-operated, and had a share in producing the defeat. The enemy upon this, retreated rapidly down the river, and would have been destroyed or taken, if we had had the good fortune to have had the 19th Light Dragoons there on the occasion. Our troops continued to follow them.—General Brown had met resistance in front from some militia, who being obliged to retire, the whole of the enemy came on and united at Cornwall, where hearing that the Glengary militia, commanded by Major Dennis of the 49th, were collecting in force upon their flank, whilst Col. Morrison was pressing their rear ; they got alarmed, and hastily crossed over on the 13th of Nov. to the American side at St. Regis, and then proceeded to Salmon River, on the south side of Lake St. Francis, which they ascended with all their boats and craft as high as the French Mills. Thus ended the third attempt at invasion of the Lower Province, which they had prepared for at immense expence.

In their march down through a part of Upper Canada, they did much mischief, which would have been still greater, but for the alarm they were in ; and which alarm increased as they advanced,

advanced, on finding the population in that quarter universally hostile to them. They on this expressed a sense of their error, in not having landed in Augusta, where they knew they had numerous friends.

In the General Order and official letter of Sir George, he says that Lieut. Colonel Morrison, with a corps of observation, and the gun boats followed in pursuance of *his* order; but this is doubted by many, and by such considered as one of those turns habitually given by him to *any thing* fortunate, as if emanating from *his* arrangements. Be that as it may, it is thought by many, that had a corps of marines (part of two batts. that arrived from Halifax at Quebec in October) who were at the time on their march to Cornwall and Prescott, not been recalled to Coteau du Lac; they in conjunction with the Glengary militia, would have given a good account of General Boyd's division. For this counter order, I do not think that Sir George is to blame, as he could not divine that the enemy, instead of keeping afloat, and descending rapidly, would lose time by landing upon the Upper Canada side and marching.

His usual unfortunate indecision however stept in to save the enemy on this occasion in another way, for if Colonel Scott with our force then at Coteau du Lac, along with Lt. Colonel Morrison and his troops, and Capt. Mulcaster's flotilla, been ordered or allowed (for it is said that



that permission was even asked) to proceed immediately to Salmon river, they (the enemy) were then in so disheartend and huddled-together a condition, that the whole or the greater part of them, would probably have been taken or destroyed ; or at all events, every thing afloat.

Instead of this, they were allowed to enter that river and disembark in quiet, with all their cannon, stores, and provisions, and take up a position which (by that species of industry that American troops possess in a high degree, of cutting down trees and forming block houses and abattis therewith, especially when spurred on by a sense of their own immediate preservation) was soon rendered formidable. They however did not feel at ease, for in Feb. 1814, as soon as the winter roads became practicable for the conveyance of their cannon and stores to Plattsburgh by the Four Corners, they sent them off, when the troops in part marched thither, and the rest under General Brown to Sackett's Harbour, after burning their huts, block houses, and water craft to a certain degree, being partly sunk, which was afterwards completed by us. Colonels Scott and Morrison, with parties from Coteau du Lac and Cornwall, went over and made a circuit by Malone and Four Corners, from whence they returned to their former quarters, after sending in some provisions ; but nothing was effected to compensate for the casualties incurred during the expedition.



The proceedings at Montreal consequent upon a knowledge of Wilkinson's defeat, remain to be described. Early on the morning of the 9th November that information was first had, by an officer from Fort Wellington, who stated that the Army had passed it on the night of the 7th, and as it was full moon and clear weather, the apprehension was, that the enemy would push on night and day, and be almost at the heels of the bearer of the intelligence.

The dismissal of the militia on the other side of the river, was instantly countermanded, and expresses sent to recall those whose march homeward had commenced. The whole of the militia on the north side from Three-Rivers upwards, were ordered out, and the Montreal Volunteers with the three Sedentary Town Battalions, marched in the afternoon for La Chine and towards Pointe Claire, and in the night took up quarters along the St. Lawrence, from the upper part of the Parish of La Chine extending downwards, their right being upon the left of a corps of marines which had marched in the forenoon, and were halted higher up. Some of the militia of the adjoining parishes, were posted from the right of the marines to the end of the Island. Upon the morning of the 9th Nov. orders were also dispatched to the Meuron Regt. and other corps, to march to the village of Caughnawago and its neighborhood.

The country battalions of militia as they arrived

ved in town were classed by Col. M'Gill, to whom the command here at that period was confided, and those fit for service were armed, equipped, and marched on by battalions to different positions, whilst men infirm, or beyond a certain age, were sent home.

In this order, the attack was waited for, and the enemy expected speedily to appear; when to the general surprise, nothing farther was heard of them until the 13th, when the joyful news of the battle of Chrysler's farm was received.

About this time, a body of seamen for the Lakes, and the 70th Regt. arrived at Quebec. The whole of the former and part of the latter were pushed on to Montreal by the Steam Boat, a mode of conveyance of such certainty and celerity, as to have been highly useful to the public service, during the war, and beneficial to the proprietor.

Sir George was at La Chine during all these operations, and shortly after the reception of the enemy having entered Salmon River, ordered the militia to return to their respective abodes, commencing their march on the 18th Nov. and in succession of time, so as to admit of passing through Montreal, on different days, and depositing their arms and ammunition. All this was done with regularity and good humour, and throughout the whole, never did any people evince greater alacrity, which I am informed they

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would

would ever have done, and ever will do, if not perverted by the machinations of some factious and restless agitators.

Let us revert to Upper Canada, and the circumstance under which the intended retreat to Kingston was at first avoided in autumn 1813, and finally countermanded. The delay of that retreat (the order for which was unknown at the time to individuals) and the departure of the chief force of the enemy from the Niagara frontier for Sacket's Harbour, (the last whereof was General Harrison with his people, who had embarked and come down from Detroit by water) renovated confidence amongst the troops and inhabitants about Burlington, who had been suffering most severely, but now began to wish for a resumption of the offensive, although inconsistent with the orders from Head Quarters, and in consequence unpalatable to General Vincent, who although a good man in private life, was alarmed at public responsibility.

*The Inhabitants* at this time represented to him the ravages committing by the American Genl. M'Clure, and that with a moderate regular and Indian force *to aid them*, this gang of destroyers and plunderers might be driven off, and the crops of the country saved for public and private use. This representation was seconded, if not instigated by Col. Murray, who pledged himself for the success of the measure so suggested; and a Corps being put under his orders, its advance had



had an instantaneous effect upon M'Clure, then about the 20 mile creek. Col. Murray's permission at first was confined to the 40 mile ; then upon a fresh representation from him of its success, it was extended to the 20 mile, and afterwards to the 12 mile creek ; which he was upon no account to pass ; but upon arriving there, and finding that M'Clure was in such a panic, that immediate advance would probably drive the American destroyers to their own side, and save Newark, he wrote to General Vincent accordingly, but in the mean time made a rapid movement upon Fort George, before it could be sanctioned or forbidden.

This effected the expulsion of M'Clure, who precipitately abandoned Fort George, (and fled across the river with his men) without destroying it, but after most barbarously and atrociously (I recollect no epithet of sufficient force to express the infamy of the act) burning at night, on the 10th of December, 1813, the town of Newark, and turning out into the open air (the ground then covered with snow) some hundreds of families, without provisions or covering, to seek shelter at a distance. That miscreant during his command, was counselled by a traitor of the name of Wilcocks, and both exulted in practising every kind of mischief against the loyal part of the inhabitants, whose houses and barns, in many instances before, they had burnt or pillaged.



Early on the 12th Col Murray entered Fort George, in sight of the still smoking ruins of Newark; Lieut. Genl. Drummond and Major Genl. Riall had arrived from England early in November, but remained in the Lower Province upon service, whilst Wilkinson's invasion was pending; but when that was over, they proceeded to the Upper Province; General Drummond, as originally intended, relieved General De Rottenburg in the military command, and in the presidency of that Province, whereupon the latter came down to Montreal. Staying a short time at Kingston, they went on to York, where General Drummond being sworn into office, they proceeded to the army above, and reached Fort George soon after its recapture. Col. Murray had planned a favorite ulterior operation, which Genl. Drummond happily had the manliness to sanction, without permission from Head Quarters. Accordingly all preparations for it being ready, the troops for the enterprise crossed the Niagara river some miles above, in the night between the 18th and 19th of December 1813; when the division thereof under Col. Murray, intended for the attack of Fort Niagara, proceeded downwards, and an hour before day light on the 19th, it was carried by assault, with the bayonet alone.

The bold and daring features of the plan were followed by the most happy execution, which verified the favorite military adage of "*fortuna favet fortibus.*"

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The force under Col. Murray, consisted of about 560 men, composed of the 100th Regt. commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton, with the Grenadier company of the Royal Scots, and flank companies of the 41st. also some militia, the latter under Col. Kirby ; all behaved like heroes. The forlorn hope was led by Lieut. Dawson of the 100th. In the advance two pickets were surprised and cut off or captured, before they could give any alarm, the Sentries on the Glacis at the Gate were killed or taken, from one of whom the countersign was obtained, before the enemy were apprised of their danger; at the moment they discovered their situation, the gate was forced, whilst a party that had been sent round to another quarter, scaled the pickets of the Fort ; the garrison being quartered in stone buildings, a severe but short contest ensued, when they surrendered, with the loss of 80 killed and wounded, and 350 prisoners — Our loss did not exceed 10, including the gallant commander, who was wounded, and Lt. Nowland 100th killed ; 27 pieces of ordnance, with a large quantity of stores, small arms, and provisions, were found in the fort.

The other division of the force which landed, was under General Riall, and consisted of detachments of the Royal Scots and 41st Regiment with a body of Indians, who drove the enemy from Lewis Town heights, and advancing upwards on the south side of the Niagara river to Fort Schlosser (which they destroyed) went

as far as Tonewanto cr  ek, where finding the bridge broken down, they returned and recrossed to Queenston, having previously in retaliation for the fate of Newark, burnt the villages of Lewistown and Manchester, with all the buildings near their line of march.

On the 30th of December before day light, General Riall with about 1000 men crossed over below Fort Erie, and attacked Black Rock, defended by 2000 American militia under General Hall, who soon gave way † and were pursued to Buffaloe, where they attempted to make a stand, but speedily fled with such precipitation to the 11 mile Creek, that we only made in all about 70 prisoners.—Our loss was 75 killed and wounded, theirs probably not much greater.

We brought off some stores and destroyed the remainder at Black Rock and Buffaloe, which villages with four small vessels, frozen up, were burnt.—The troops then returned to our side, and went into peaceable winter quarters.

General Drummond was present at the points of embarkation, and actively employed in preparing those expeditions, and giving orders for their execution.

The events just described, come pointedly in  
proof,

† Capt. Robinson of the King's Regt. now Major by Brevet, is said to have greatly contributed to this by an opportune movement of that brave corps made when the command devolved upon him, by Lt. Colonel Ogilvie being wounded.



proof of what zeal and enterprise can effect, and how little loss sometimes attends the most hazardous attempts, whilst military inactivity and indecision, prey upon the Soldiers minds, generate discontent, and promote desertion.

It is extraordinary, that any part of the merit of the above operation should have been claimed by Sir George ; yet on reference to the General Order of 12th January, 1814, on the burning of Newark and consequent retaliation it will be found to be more than insinuated therein, that *such retaliation* (assuredly not more severe than a sense of justice and protection to our own subjects) was by *his order* ; whereas it is well known, that the time which elapsed between the recapture of Fort George and the commencement of retaliation by us, did not admit of the receipt of *an order from Head Quarters, then at Quebec*, on the subject.

The general belief is, (reasoning from prior and posterior events) that had the intention of assaulting Fort Niagara and of retaliation for the burning of Newark been known to him, he would have given orders to prevent both, as being far too hazardous.

I shall close this number with noticing the capture of a band of Traitors (who had joined the enemy and assisted in their depredations) by a party of Loyal Militia of the Country of Oxford, under Lieut. Col. Bostwick.—These ungrateful wretches, were Americans who had taken



ken the oaths to his Majesty, and had been settled many years in that quarter of Upper Canada, where many of them had acquired a good deal of property, and experienced the like protection and favor as other subjects.

They were afterwards tried at Ancaster for High Treason, 15 whereof were convicted, and 8 executed, the remainder being reprieved, to await the Prince Regent's decision, in respect to their final fate.

General Hull's exterminating Proclamation on his entrance into Upper Canada, at Sandwich, in 1812, wherein he so confidently speaks of conquest, relying upon the friendship of the multitude of American settlers in that Province, is illustrated by the conduct of those men, when they thought that the American arms would prevail.—Such facts should operate as a lasting memento to us, of the dangerous policy of admitting natives of the States to hold lands in either Province.

*VERITAS.*

Montreal, May 17th, 1815.

## [NO. VII.]

*To the Editor of the Montreal Herald*

SIR,

Having in a former number said, that the disaster to our fleet upon Lake Erie, had obliged us to abandon all our posts beyond that Lake, I omitted to add, with the exception of Michilimakinac.

It however must have fallen, if an attack had been made thereon in autumn 1813, but neglecting to do so, it was saved. That post, at all times valuable as a point of communication with the western Indians, now became doubly so, from the recent misfortunes upon Lake Erie; for had it been lost, the whole of the Indian nations, must from necessity, not choice, (for we are their natural allies and friends from unity of interests) have submitted to the Americans, although their implacable enemies. The consequences might have been fatal to all the country beyond Kingston, as the enemy, by the command of Lakes Erie and Huron, in such case, would have encircled that country, as it were upon three sides, and rendered its defence by us impracticable.

Sir George for once acted with decision, by providing during the winter of 1813, near Lake Huron, the means of conveying a reinforcement to Michilimakinac, early in the spring; which reinforcement, and the command afterwards of that post, he confided to Lieut Col. M'Douall, an officer of zeal and intelligence, who acquitted himself with such judgment and diligence, in increasing the defences of the place, and in supplying and husbanding provisions for his garrison, as to defy the attack of the enemy, who appeared there in July, and on the 4th of Aug. 1814, landed 1000 men. These were repulsed and drove on board their vessels by a small number of Indians, with considerable loss, before the garrison, (owing to a false rumour that a landing was making in their rear) could co-operate, else the whole would have been killed or taken.

The Indians on this occasion, behaved with exemplary zeal and fidelity in our cause; and indeed their attachment throughout has been such as to make me blush for my country, in the direliction of their interests in the negotiations at Ghent, after so many promises made them, and so fair a prospect at the commencement of those negotiations. A detachment of the American fleet which attacked Michilimakinac, had previously pillaged and burnt all the private houses and buildings at Saint Mary's, the North West Company's inclusive; which coupled with the uniform proceedings of the enemy in Upper Canada, proves it to have proceeded from



from systematic instructions of the American Government, to destroy private property. The American Major Holmes, who commanded at the destruction and pillage of Saint Mary's, was guilty of a piece of such savage atrocity, as to deserve being noticed, as it is attested by persons of credit, who were eye witnesses of the fact. After employing a horse and cart during the day to convey away the plunder, they in the evening, tied the former to a house, in such manner as not to be able to escape, and then set fire to it, when the poor animal was burnt to death, whilst the American troops were looking on, and enjoying the scene with a fiend like satisfaction. All the cattle, garden stuff, and other provisions, which they could not carry off, they destroyed, with a view to starve those who escaped from their clutches ; and let it be remembered, there was not a military man, or men in public employment, or article belonging to the public there of any kind. The brutal Holmes was killed in the attack upon Michilimakinac afterwards.

One of the great objects of this expedition was to get hold of the North West Furs which fortunately escaped.

A Lieutenant of the Royal Navy, and about 20 seamen formed part of the reinforcement sent with Lt. Col. M'Douall. These manned the Nancy Schooner, which was armed, and employed to transport provisions for the garrison,



but obliged to be destroyed, to prevent her capture by the American fleet. Lieut. Worfleý had afterwards a brilliant retaliation, having with his handful of seamen in boats, aided by Lieut. Bulger, and some troops in boats furnished from the garrison, most gallantly boarded the American armed Schooner Tigress, of 1 long 24 pr. and a 12, and carried her sword in hand. With her, they some days afterwards carried the Scorpion, of 1 long 24 pounder. Each had 30 men.

Colonel M'Douall detached Major M'Kay, of the Michigan Fencibles, with a small force, to Prairie des Chiens ; where, aided by the Indians and a small 3 pounder field piece, he took the American Fort, mounting 6 guns, and flanked by a large gun boat, carrying also a considerable number. Major M'Kay's exertions saved the Americans captured by him from the Indians, who had before been outraged by them, but not one has had the justice or candour since to publish the fact. It is a wonder, they did not proclaim that he had scalped the whole.

On the 4th of May 1814, our fleet under Sir James Yeo, sailed from Kingston with General Drummond, and 800 troops on board, exclusive of seamen and marines ; and appearing off Oswego, landed some of each class, who carried the Fort by assault, with a loss to us of about 90 killed and wounded. A captain of marines was among the former, and that most valuable Naval Officer

Officer Capt. Mulcaster, was so severely wounded, as to have been considered incapable of future service, but he has happily recovered. We captured and destroyed 12 pieces of ordnance, and some stores, burnt the barracks, dismantled the fort, and brought off a schooner and some boats with ordnance, naval, and other stores.

The enemy lost about 100 killed and wounded, and 60 prisoners. We failed however in the material object, as the principal stores for the American fleet were at the Onondago falls.

Had Fort Oswego been occupied and kept for the summer, it is generally supposed that the enemy could not have transported stores by land, to equip their fleet that season ; but a far more certain object would have been, to have attacked Sacket's Harbour itself, for the purpose of destroying the fleet and dépôt, and then to have abandoned it.

Such a prize was worth contending for at almost any risk, and at that time especially, as the garrison was weak, from the most efficient part of it under General Brown having gone to Buffalo.

This did not escape observation, as it is believed upon good grounds, that an application was actually made to Sir George for a force adequate to this service ; but it was refused. Ever since he let that place slip through his fingers in 1813, when in his power, he seems to have viewed it  
(Sacket's,)

(Sacket's) with such a species of horror, as to have resolved on never again attempting it himself, or allowing any other officer to do so.

The repeated neglect of *that grand object*, has been the source of all our misfortunes. In the present case, we had a disposable force, adequate to the enterprise, had it been undertaken, as there could have been spared from Lower Canada, at that time (spring 1814) the 2d battn. King's Regt, the 70th, and De Meurons, besides one or two other corps; which with the garrison of Kingston, and such number of Upper Canada militia and Indians as could have been made useful upon such an expedition, when aided by our fleet, then superior to the enemy's, could not have failed of success.

There would have still remained in Lower Canada, the 6th battn. Embodied Militia (with Sedentary if needful) to do the duty of Quebec; and in Montreal district, the 13th and 49th regts (if not sent upwards,) a battalion of marines, Canadian Fencible Regt, Voltigeurs, five strong battalions of Embodied Militia, the 19th Dragoons, one squadron excepted, and a respectable Artillery force. Exclusive of these, any number of Sedentary militia could have been had, if necessary; for it is well known that the enemy had then no intention of invading Lower Canada, because they were collecting their whole force against the Niagara frontier, as every body believed, but Sir George, who persisted in his credulity



credulity to the last, from no other visible cause, than that it would have interfered with the *grand Camp of instruction* about to be formed. Exclusive of all the above Corps, there were reinforcements daily expected by sea, some of which arrived in May at Quebec.

Will either Sir George, or the admirers of his military talents, dare to insinuate the degrading idea, that the Embodied Militia were not to be considered effective, after so many complimentary orders issued, and the actual experience of the Chateaugay contest? yet they must either do so, or admit that he was grossly neglectful of his duty. Really one would suppose, from the negative service on which the embodied militia was generally employed by him, that he intended them for mere parade, or to be kept in the back ground. It has been frequently said, and meant as a compliment to Sir George, that the militia *did under him* what *they would not have done under any other Governor*. This compliment is a false and scandalous libel upon the militia, for, otherwise it would imply that their attachment was not to *the Government*, but to *the Governor*; but I am fully persuaded, that any Governor of energy, with the like opportunities that he had, would have turned the militia of this country to far more valuable account, and furnished most positive proofs of what I assert.

Our fleet after returning from Oswego, and disembarking the troops at Kingston, was employed



ployed in blockading Sacket's Harbour, and scouring the coast, particularly towards Oswego. Upon this service, Capts. Popham and Spilsbury being employed with a flotilla of 2 boats, carrying guns, and some smaller craft, the crews whereof amounted to about 180 men, had intelligence or got sight of an American convoy of boats from Oswego, bound to Sacket's, with guns, anchors, cables, and all kinds of stores for their fleet, which convoy took refuge in Sandy Creek. Our flotilla unfortunately entered after them, when they were found to be protected by a body of Riflemen, militia and Indians, in a situation highly favorable to them, and most unfavorable to us. The consequence was, that after a sharp but most unequal conflict, the whole of our boats, officers, and men were killed or taken. Our loss in killed and wounded was 70, but the enemy from their situation suffered almost nothing.

This misfortune created at that time a gloomy sensation. It was certainly imprudent to enter the creek, as our people were thereby placed in a situation where neither courage nor naval skill could avail, against their invisible foe; but as the object had it been attainable, was great, and this imprudence, the effect of an excess of zeal in the service whereon they were employed, what good subject can censure the motive, however much he may regret the issue? The blockade of Sacket's Harbour being soon raised, the enemy continued to get forward by water, the  
guns

guns and stores for their fleet, and regained the command of Lake Ontario, from July to October 1814.

Towards spring, 1814, so inveterate was Sir George's rage for amistices, notwithstanding the injurious consequences of the former to the military service, that a negociation for another was set on foot, and defeated solely from the refusal of our Admiral on the American station to concur in it. The Americans gave out that the proposition came from Sir George, which I believe, because otherwise he would have met it at once, by a direct negative, that would have ended all discussion on the subject.

In January 1814, whilst the Legislature was sitting at Quebec, Sir George made a trip to Montreal from no military motive, that has ever been discovered or assigned, during which the *then Assembly* was active in preparing mischief. That Session was a stormy one, and ending in March, the Head Quarters were re-transferred to Montreal.

In a short time our post at La Colle Mill, commanded by Major Handcock, of the 13th regt. was attacked by about 3000 of General Wilkinson's army from Plattsburg, furnished with cannon, who were most gallantly repulsed with severe loss in killed and wounded, by a comparative handful of men. Our loss was about 60. A part of our flotilla aided in producing this fortunate result. Soon after the navigation opened

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upon lake Champlain, Capt. Pring, in the naval command there, sailed from Isle aux Noix with our flotilla, then superior to that of the enemy, which had wintered in Otter Creek, where they had a ship-yard employed in constructing a force intended to surpass ours. Capt. Pring in consequence applied to Sir George for some troops to accompany him, with a view of attempting to destroy this establishment, and the vessels in that Creek, whether afloat or upon the stocks, which, next to Sacket's Harbour, was an object worth a trial at some risk. As usual, the application was refused. When Capt. Pring returned from his cruize off that creek, he reported to Sir George *what might have been done by a joint attack*, and *then* he was offered assistance, but the Capt. replied, that it was *then too late*, as the enemy had taken alarm and prepared accordingly.

Sir George had the extraordinary fatality of either never attempting an active operation, or of thinking of it only when the time for practical execution was past.

As the season for action advanced, to the astonishment of every one, there was formed at *Chambly*, what is called a *Camp of Instruction*, comprising the greater part of the force above enumerated, and from which might, and ought to have been detached, a force for the attack of Sackett's Harbor; or for the reinforcement of the Niagara frontier, seriously threatened as it *then was with invasion*, in the opinion of every person



person who had eyes to see or ears to hear. Had the first mentioned object been attained, the enemy would not have ventured to cross into Upper Canada; or if Sir George was obstinately bent on letting Sackett's alone, the reinforcement of the Niagara frontier became the more imperiously necessary to secure it against the enemy's accumulating force, which had been even seen by some of our own officers in returning from captivity, but whose reports thereon were utterly disregarded.

Thus the *Camp abovesaid* furnished the means of *instruction to the enemy upon the said frontier*, by allowing them to practise against our very inferior force, but of *destruction to our troops there employed*, who were thereby doomed to combat against fearful odds, as will be seen hereafter, which is quite inexcusable, seeing we had the means of prevention in our power; for so infatuated was Sir George, that not a man was sent from Lower Canada to their aid, until the 12th of July, after our first disaster near Chippewa was known.

If it be said that there was not subsistence for an increased number of troops at that distance, I will answer by asking, why the means of conveying provisions had been neglected to be provided in due season? and further I will ask, whether the resources of a great provision country, viz. that of Long Point upon Lake Erie and its circuit, were not lost to us, and left to



be destroyed by the enemy, from our not sending troops for its protection? Had a regiment been sent there early in 1814 it would have secured subsistence in flour to our whole force on the Niagara line.

From the end of May, reinforcements from Great Britain, Ireland and the West Indies came in; but the *accursed Camp of instruction* continued, when to our astonishment in June and July, such a numerous body of troops arrived from Bordeaux, that it became evident Sir George was quite bewildered thereby. Piece meal reinforcements were now dispatched to Upper Canada, and a very large force kept below to do *something*; but what it was, remained doubtful, although a bustle of preparation began across the river, which was continued for months at infinite expence.

The public mind was now buoyed up with the hope of at last seeing (that favorite object of primary importance to the protection of the Canadas) *the destruction of the depot at Sackett's Harbor, accomplished.*

The foundation of that hope rested upon its being worthy of every effort and every risk, which was strengthened by seeing so many more troops, than our chief had asked for, or knew how to employ. It was therefore thought, that he would have felt himself compelled to think of *Sackett's Harbor, and that only*, until its capture was effected.

In an evil hour however, and by some strange perversity of intellect, Sir George shunned that place as a pestilence, and went off with 12,000 men to Plattsburg, which some flattered themselves proceeded from a wish to whet his appetite, until the large ship at Kingston was ready; but when he was seen to return under a surfeit of his own creation, all hope was lost, and the most gloomy despair and indignation succeeded.

Upon his arrival at Plattsburgh, such a scene of military imbecility on his part was witnessed, as is incredible. He neither evinced the smallest combination of plan, or vigor of execution; nor was any object of the expedition visible, unless through its effect, that of bringing on the destruction of *our fleet*, without making an effort to save it, or to *rescue the army* from the disgrace of being tame spectators of that destruction. Would to God that this fatal expedition could be blotted out from history. It casts an indelible stain upon our arms, (in as far as the conduct of a commander, in spite of the feelings and high spirit of the gallant troops under his orders, could do) that can never be sufficiently deplored.

As it is to become a subject of military investigation, I should have declined a previous inquiry into its demerits, had the question not been forced upon me by the intemperate zeal and fulsome compliments of his friends and addressers, who will insist upon his conduct therein  
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being a master-piece of military skill, sound judgment, and great humanity. To go to trial with such pocket-fulls of signatures to addressees, procured in the manner, and by the arts which were notorious, and those from persons whereof not one in a thousand was capable of understanding the subject matter upon which he was made so peremptorily to pronounce an unqualified decision, carries, in my mind, the appearance of an attempt to brow-beat government and his court-martial into an acquittal, right or wrong, under an idea of inverting injurious consequences in this country. All this will do him injury instead of good ; for truth and justice will prevail, and whatsoever the result of the trial may be, it will be quietly submitted to here, the opinion of sycophants to the contrary notwithstanding.

Captain Downie of the Royal Navy arrived from Kingston to take the command of the fleet at Isle aux Noix, a week after the *Constance*, our largest vessel, was launched, and about 15 days before the fatal action. The greater part of his crew had just arrived, or were arriving, being drafts from different ships, and unknown to the officers and to each other. There was no leisure for discipline previous to the attack, as the whole time was necessarily occupied in the rigging and equipment of the fleet, to meet Sir George's importunate calls for co-operation, as the season was advancing. So hurried and defective was the equipment, that I shall give  
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one instance of it in this material point, that when the vessels were sweeping up the Lake against the wind, the joiners were at work in one of the *Constance's* magazines; and the powder in a boat along-side, whilst the carpenters at the same time were busy in fixing ring-bolts, &c. for the guns and carronades, with shot lockers, &c. All this was known to Sir George, and yet his impatience at the delay of the appearance of the fleet before Plattsburgh was extreme.

Poor Downie was placed in a sad dilemma; for from circumstances whereof he had heard in respect to another quarter, he had reason to apprehend that Sir George would fish for an opportunity of throwing upon him the consequences of keeping the army idle, from an alleged want of speedy co-operation, or of furnishing an excuse for its retreat; and on the other hand, if he went prematurely into action, *his own reputation* might be ruined. After some deliberation, *his zeal* stepped in to make him *risk the latter* as the less of two evils. Many must recollect the broad hints given before the day of the action, by persons belonging to Head Quarters, who remained in town, that the army was ready, but had been kept in inactivity for some days at Plattsburg, merely because the fleet, *somehow*, had not come up to co-operate. And also they will recollect, how suddenly the tune changed after the action was heard of: for then prudence and humanity stepped in, (the object being



ing now gone) to effect a retreat with celerity, and which was managed without the aid of naval co-operation.

The chapter of accidents was sadly against us in the battle of the 11th Sept. 1814. The *Confiance* before she got into her station, had two anchors shot away, and the wind veering and baffling her, she was compelled to anchor out of her intended station with *the only one* that remained. The gallant Downie was killed at the commencement. One of our vessels got aground, and thereby became useless, whilst two thirds of our gun boats shamefully fled, towards the close of the action, when it would have been of immense importance to *wind that ship* to bring the guns of her least damaged side to bear upon the enemy. That operation was so difficult from having but one anchor that it could not be performed, as the whole fire of the enemy was at the time upon her, which compelled her to strike when in a sinking state.

In order however to convey an accurate idea upon the subject of the expedition to Plattsburg, by reasoning upon Sir George's official letter, I extract the following parts of it, viz. —“ That on the 3d of Sept. our army seized the enemy's entrench'd camp at Champlain town (what a feat !) after it was abandoned by them ; that on the 5th *the army* halted within 8 miles of Plattsburg ; on the 6th it entered Plattsburg, after reversing the position of the enemy at Dead Creek

Creek, which they abandoned and left to be defended by the gun boats." He then describes the position of the enemy "on an elevated ridge south of the Saranac, with its redoubts &c. armed with heavy ordnance, with their flotilla, the Saratoga, Surprise, Thunderer, Preble, and 10 gun boats" (which gun boats please to remark reader, were a moment before said to be at *Dead Creek*) "*at anchor out of gun shot from the shore.*" He adds, that "he immediately communicated the circumstance to Captain Downie, who had the Constance, Linnet, Broke, and Shannon" (Capt. Pring calls the latter the Chub and Finch) "and 12 gun boats, and requested *his co-operation (mark that)* and in the mean time batteries were constructed. On the morning of the 11th our flotilla was seen over the isthmus of land &c. (it seems he would not trust to his ears, in respect to the scaling of the guns for a signal as agreed upon) when immediately certain brigades were ordered to advance to force the ford of the Saranac, and escalate the enemy's works upon the heights; but scarcely had the troops forced a passage and ascended those heights, when he heard the shout of victory (here his ears appear to have been pretty sharp) from the enemy's works, in consequence of the flags of the Constance and Linnet being struck, (they did not strike within 15 minutes of each other) and the gun boats flying." Finally he adds "this unlooked for event, depriving me of the co-operation of the fleet" (but in the name of honor and good faith why did you not co-operate before) without

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without which the further prosecution of the service was become impracticable? I did not hesitate to arrest the course of the troops advancing to the attack, because the most complete success would have been unavailing, and the possession of the enemy's works offered no advantage to compensate for the loss we must have sustained in acquiring possession of them."

Now would it not be supposed, that all this was done in the time that Sir George was turning himself round from looking at the fleet, to look at his troops, and vice versa! but what must the astonishment be, when it is found, that the Constance resisted two hours and a half, and the Linnet 15 minutes longer! Surely the troops, whose Commander was so impatient to see the fleet come up, ought to have been ready to have entered the enemy's works the moment they did appear. Had they so entered, it is unquestionable that our fleet would have been victorious, or had they been permitted to enter, even when recalled, it is almost demonstrable that the enemy's fleet must have surrendered, or at least ours have been retaken.

There may be *some truth* in Sir George's official narrative, but *much* is concealed. A letter was sent to Capt. Downie, strongly urging him to come on, as the army had been long waiting for his co-operation, (stating as a proof of it, that it had been under arms from day light the day before, in expectation of the fleet) and closing for a hope that nothing but the state of wind,  
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prevented the fleet from coming up. This last insinuation conveyed more meaning than meets the ear, as if hinting that artificial delays were made. The brave Downie replied, that he required no urging to do his duty; that he should be up the first shift of the wind, and make the signal of his approach by scaling his guns.

He was as good as his word.—The guns were scaled when he got under weigh, upon hearing which Sir George issued an *order* for the Troops to *cock*, instead of *that of instant co-operation*. At length, when *he saw the fleet*, a movement was ordered, but of course too late, as so little previous arrangement had been made for being ready to come into immediate contact with the enemy, that the troops put in motion, had a circuit of miles to make, and then when at length close in with their object, were recalled the moment that the fleet fell.

As to Capt. Downie being urged by Sir George to go into action, the whole chain of circumstances corroborate the fact, and the indiscretion of Major Coore in furnishing living evidence of what the hero, now no more, said is not more fortunate for the cause of truth than conclusive thereon; besides this, every professional man knows, that no naval officer in his senses, would from choice, (if left to the guidance of his own judgment) have gone into action with a *new ship* and *raw crew*, immediately after her equipment, without a week or ten days to discipline that crew, and accustom them to their stations and quarters.

Much stress is laid by Sir George and his friends upon the allegation that the enemy's fleet was out of gun shot from the shore, which is not true. But why not have entered the enemy's works, and given practical proof of the range of shot against their fleet instead of making conjectural assertions? Had *that been done*, widely different would have been the issue.

So thoroughly did Capt. Downie depend upon co-operation by land, that he harangued his men when going into action, to this effect, "My lads, we shall be immediately assisted by the army ashore—Let us show them, that our part of the duty is well done." Poor fellow how he was mistaken. In 10 minutes after he fell, and left Sir George to tell his own story.—This speech proved to have in the end a pernicious effect upon the crew, when the promises it conveyed, were seen not to be fulfilled ashore.

It is a fact, that the American Commodore was so impressed with the idea that their works ashore would still be carried, that he did not take possession of *our vessels* for a long time after the action terminated; he being employed in getting *his own* out of reach from the shore, apprehending that their own batteries would be turned against them.—In the evening he expressed an expectation, that next morning the British colours would be seen flying upon the American works; and when General Macomb came off at day light, to say that our army had retreated in the night of the 11th leaving their  
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sick and wounded behind, and destroying quantities of Stores and Provisions, Commodore McDonough would not credit the fact ; but when it was persisted in, he cautioned Macomb to beware of a *ruse de guerre*, as the British army would either return next night, or was then proceeding by forced marches to *Sackett's Harbour*.

It is known that Macomb, notwithstanding all his puffs about our defeat, was actually sitting in gloomy despair upon a Gun, whilst our troops were advancing on the 11th, and ready to surrender the moment that the first British Soldier appeared upon the parapet ; and when it was notified that they had suddenly halted, and were then on the retreat, he started up almost frantic with joy, and could hardly believe the evidence of his senses.—He had only with him about 1500 of the refuse of the American troops on the Plattsburg duty, the effectives having previously marched off for Sackett's Harbour under General Izard. To this may be added perhaps 3000 militia, chiefly collected after Sir George halted on the 6th at Plattsburg, and on which day, he might have entered their works almost without opposition, had our troops not been kept back *for a grand coup*, and behold its *finale*, !!!

As to saving of men by the retreat after this loss of our fleet, it is well known that twice the number were lost by desertion, that an assault would have cost us ; and this he knew at the time he wrote, that “ the possession of the enemy.



“ enemy’s works offered us no advantage to  
 “ compensate for the loss we must have sustain-  
 “ ed in acquiring possession of them.”

Did Sir George really believe, that we had lost the use of our reasoning faculties? was the ground upon which *the men, artillery, and stores at Saranac flood*, the object of capture? or was it not (assuredly it was) *the men, artillery, and stores, standing upon that ground!* and if so, why were *they suffered to escape?* Surely the military character of the gallant army committed to his charge, and the manes of the gallant Downie, who perished under such circumstances, required some sacrifices.

I wonder in what school Sir George learnt the humiliating doctrine, that a British Soldier’s life is more valuable to him than his military honor; and yet to justify such a retreat, that principle must be assumed.

Did not the loss of our fleet require a military *set off?* and did not that loss absolutely impose it upon Sir George as an imperious duty to furnish that *set off*, by capturing the enemy’s army, to prevent the effect which a retreat under such circumstances must produce, ornamented as he well knew it would be by American gasconade? The mischievous moral effect of the Plattsburg business, has been, and will be incalculable both in America and in Europe; for that will be heard of in many countries and places, where it will not be known, that *the commander alone was to*  
*blame*

*blame*, and the army under him indignant on the occasion.

Were the events of Sir George's command, and especially the expeditions to Sackett's Harbor and Plattsburg to become examples for the British Army to follow; from possessing the hearts of Lions, they would soon be reduced to the timidity of Lambs; and the future enquiries of military men would be, *not* who had nobly done his duty, but who had avoided a battle, or who had contrived to escape unhurt.

It has been said, that his General Orders and official letters were often composed with a view to deceive at a distance; and his Plattsburg letter furnishes direct proof of this accusation being correct. It is dated there the 11th of September 1814, as if written on the spot immediately after the naval battle, and before the degrading retreat commenced, whereas it is well known, that the letter did not go from Canada until it was carried by Mr. Secretary Brenton who sailed from Brandy Pots on the 9th of Oct. consequently it was written in Montreal long after the date it bears.—In proof of this, read the following paragraph of that letter, “As the troops concentrated and approached the line of separation between this Province,” (is Plattsburg then in Canada) “and the United States, the American army &c.” What a sad slip of the pen or memory is here! But if for Plattsburg 11th September, there be substituted Montreal 21st Sept. or any subsequent day, then the blunder

der will be explained.—It is true that such was the celerity of his personal retreat, that on the 13th he issued an order dated at Odell-Town ; but I strongly suspect that on the 11th after the action he was not in a state to write letters any where.—Another proof of its having been written at Montreal, and not at Plattsburg, is, that in the first General Order afterwards, the gun-boats were in a manner commended for effecting their retreat in safety (probably from the sympathetic feeling of the moment) whereas in the revision of that order, they are left out, but mentioned in this false dated letter as *flying* ; because upon reflection, their not having *done their duty*, might lead people aside from the consideration *that he had not done his own*.

But why was the letter dated at Plattsburgh ? Truly just to deceive *John Bull*, and prevent the necessity of *then* letting *him* know, how many men were lost by desertion in that memorable retreat, and what quantity of provisions and stores were destroyed in it, or during the expedition.

VERITAS.

Montreal, 23d May, 1815.



## [NO. VIII.]

*To the Editor of the Montreal Herald*

SIR,

The enemy, as before mentioned, having been suffered to mature without counteraction, their preparations for another invasion of the Niagara line in Upper Canada, whilst Sir George was occupied with parade in the Lower Province; they crossed over about 9000 men, on the 3d of July, 1814, under General Brown, part above and part below Fort Erie, which was immediately invested and summoned; and being in a situation incapable of effectual defence, it surrendered.

After this, they descended towards Chipewa, and on the 5th, Major General Riall anticipated them by marching out from our lines, and attacking them at Street's Creek, a short distance above. After a severe conflict, our *very inferior force*, consisting at most of 1500 men, composed of a part of the Royal Scots, and King's regiment, 100th regt. a few of the Royal Artillery, and 19th Dragoons, with some militia, *was* obliged to retire to the position at Chipewa, with the loss of 500 killed and wounded. In

the former list were 6 officers, half of them militia, and in the latter, 25 officers, whereof 3 were militia. The Royal Scots and 100th were the chief sufferers. Lieut. Col. Gordon commanding the former, and Lieut. Col. the Marquis of Tweeddale the latter, were among the wounded. The latter officer had only joined the day before, and it is certainly a proud consideration, and a favorable omen to our country, to see men of high rank among the most forward in pursuit of military fame, and incurring all the risks and privations incident to the honorable profession of arms throughout the war. It is to be observed that the militia of the neighborhood under Lieut. Col. Dickson, bore their share in the dangers and losses of the day.

General Riall finding his position turned after this action, retreated towards Fort George, into which, and Forts Niagara and Mississago, having thrown an additional force, he made a rapid flank movement, and gained the 20 mile creek, on the route to *Burlington*, thereby preserving his communications from below. This foiled the enemy in their views, which were to have proceeded by forced marches to get possession of *that post*, and insulate our force upon the Niagara line, whilst their fleet, under Commodore Chauncey, was expected to cut off our supplies and reinforcements from Kingston, as also to co-operate in ulterior proceedings against our troops so insulated. Fortunately Chauncey was not ready to sail before the end of July.

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General Riall's attack upon the enemy, under so great a disproportion of force, as probably 5 to 1, has been censured as rash by many ; but the probability is, that if he had not done so, and broke in upon their plan of operations, by that daring and unexpected manœuvre, they probably, without the aid of their fleet, would (by appearing to threaten an attack upon our lines at Chipewa) have marched to their left, and have actually cut off our communication with Burlington, as originally intended.

In this view of the subject, his attack was fortunate, and the retreat afterwards made by him, is deserving of credit, from having been effected in good order, without loss of men, artillery, stores, or baggage ; so that the confidence of his troops remained unabated. Had he retreated in the first instance without fighting, the probability is, that his men would have been dispirited, as considering such a retrograde movement then premature.

It is said that General Riall was ignorant of the whole force of the enemy being united, and he doubtless considered it important in such case to cripple them, before the junction could be formed, or their fleet appear.

That officer being afterwards reinforced, advanced, and took up a position about the 20th of July, at the 12 mile Creek. The enemy, on the 15th advanced a strong column from Queenston towards Fort George, with the appearance



of establishing themselves in the neighbourhood, but Lieut. Col. Tucker, who was left in command of the Forts, having marched out from Fort Mississago, at the same time that a detachment moved from Fort George, they saw such a reception preparing for them, as induced them to give up their intentions and retire.

A few nights before, a very neat affair upon a small scale, took place between a party of the King's regiment, consisting of 32 men of the light company, under Major Evans, who had volunteered his services on the occasion, and upwards of 350 of the enemy, in which the American General Swift was killed, and the former, although at one time surrounded, extricated himself and party with much skill and gallantry.

On the morning of the 25th July, Lieut. Colonel Tucker with part of the garrison of Fort George, and of the 89th Regt. drove the enemy from Lewis Town, on the south side of the Niagara River, bringing away without loss, some baggage, tents and provisions. The same day General Brown began to retire from Queenston, towards Chipewa, when finding himself pressed by Major General Riall, with about 1500 regulars and incorporated militia, exclusive of Indians, who had advanced upon his flank from the 12 mile creek; and conceiving that by a prompt advance against so small a force, he might discomfit them before they could be reinforced, determined, at 6 in the evening, to attack them at Lundy's Lane, 3 miles below Chipewa. The

unequal contest was maintained bravely for some time, but being overpowered, our troops were retreating, when General Drummond coming up with detachments of the Royals, King's and 89th Regts, ordered them again to advance, when the contest was furiously continued for sometime ; but on the arrival of Col. Scott's brigade, consisting of a part of the Royals, Kings and 103d, in all about 1200 or 1500 men, the conflict was renewed with redoubled spirit on both sides, and continued until past midnight, when the enemy retreated precipitately to Chippewa, leaving a field piece and a howitzer, with two tumbrils in our possession. They, at one time, had possession of three of our field pieces, which were soon recovered. The enemy's loss was about 1500, and amongst them Generals Brown and Scott, and many field officers wounded. Ours about 900 in all.

The conduct of our regular troops was most gallant, and the incorporated militia emulated them, and sustained a severe loss. The coolness, intrepidity and zeal of General Drummond, could not be surpassed ; for although he received a bad wound in the neck, he carefully concealed it, and remained in the field, animating the troops, until the whole was over. General Riall was severely wounded and made prisoner by some of the enemy's horse, which at one time had got into our rear. The conflict being in the dark, various mistakes of friends for foes, and vice versa, were made. Lieut. Colonel Morrison, 89th  
Lieut.

Lieut. Col. Pearson, Inspecting Field Officer, and Lieut. Col. Robinson, commanding the incorporated Militia, were also severely wounded. Lieut. Colonel Hamilton, commanding the Sedentary Militia had the good fortune not to be hurt, although his exertions did him great credit. Of inferior officers, above 40 were killed and wounded, of which 18 militia.

It is matter of great regret that the contest had not happened in day light, and in an open country, where superiority of discipline could have been made available, against the great disproportion of numbers, that we had to encounter, which were then above two to one, even after General Drummond, with the reinforcements came up.

On the 27th of July, the enemy retreated across the Chipewa towards Fort Erie, laying waste the country, and destroying the Bridges, having previously burnt Street's mill and the village of Saint David's. Had we possessed the means of immediate pursuit, there cannot be a doubt, that they would have been driven back to their own territory; consequently the fatal neglect to send up timely reinforcements, cannot be too often deplored.

Our troops moved on with caution, and took up a position before Fort Erie, but the enemy had in the mean time established themselves to great advantage by abattis and other works, particularly on snake hill, and also by strengthening the Fort.



On the 3d of August a well conceived plan was formed against Black Rock, which had it been executed as intended, the enemy at Fort Erie must have been reduced to the utmost peril, it not to a surrender; by reason of the interception or destruction of their supplies from the states.

About 1000 men crossed over to the American side below Snake island, under Lieut. Col. Tucker, but by some unaccountable fatality, that part of the troops who got over first, neglected to occupy a bridge, over which the whole were to pass, and the enemy were thereby enabled to secure it by a small corps of Riflemen, who threw in such a fire upon our people, when they attempted to pass, as to create a confusion that ended in a precipitate retreat, whereby the object of the expedition was completely frustrated. Had it succeeded, an attack upon Fort Erie was intended then to have been also made.

An assault upon that position was however still contemplated, and as a measure preparatory thereto, Captain Dobbs, of the Royal Navy, with a body of seamen, were conveyed by land, as also boats into Lake Erie. On the night of the 11th August, 1814, they descended that lake and in a masterly style, boarded and carried the enemy's armed Schooner Somers, of 2 long 12 pounders, and the Porcupine, of one long 12, each was commanded by a Naval Lieut. and each had 35 men :—a third vessel of same force escaped capture by an accident. The three were at anchor off Fort Erie. The two which we  
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captured went down the rapids, into the rear of our troops. Our loss was Lieut. Radcliffe, of the Navy, and two seamen killed, with 4 wounded. That of the enemy was 8 in all.

It no doubt was intended that the general assault upon their works, should have speedily followed the capture of the vessels, but circumstances occurred to delay it until the 15th before day. At the outset, we had a fair prospect of success, our troops having entered their works at several points, but especially having established themselves in Fort Erie, when unhappily an explosion there took place, (whether from accident or design, is still a contested point, but I think the former) which destroyed so many of our officers and men, as to occasion the rest to retire with precipitation.

Our loss was most severe, being in all in killed, wounded, and prisoners, about 900; and in this loss was comprised some most valuable officers, amongst whom were Col. Scott and Lieut. Col. Drummond, with others of inferior rank. The list of wounded officers, including prisoners, was above 30.

The loss of the enemy must have been much inferior. The result of this attack is greatly to be lamented, as the loss it cost us was most heavy; but I can by no means consider the implied censure thereon by Sir George Prevost, as founded upon sound military principles. The ground thereof was, from its being a night attack; now  
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in almost every instance, of a desperate attack upon fortified positions, it has been done at night, and for this reason, that the troops in advancing, are covered by the darkness from that precision in the fire of the enemy, which would otherwise be destructive.

There is a recent proof of this, in General Lambert's dispatches, for he assigns it as one cause of the failure at New Orleans, that the attack, although intended to be before day, was from various causes delayed so long, that our troops could be seen at 200 yards distance from the enemy's lines as they advanced to the assault.

It is hardly fair in those who risk nothing either by day or night, to censure those who do ; but there is more propriety in the remark, that as the 82d was not far off, and the 6th regt. following in succession, these circumstances furnished good reason for delaying the attack until their arrival. There is however in opposition to that, the emulation and zeal of those brave men, who sealed their opinions with their lives upon the occasion.

The wounds of General Brown were such that he resigned the command to General Gaines, for some time, but was able to resume it again in September. The enemy's fleet was superior to ours during the months of August, September, and half of October, 1814 ; during which times Sir James Yeo remained at Kingston, waiting for the completion of our 3<sup>d</sup> decker, the *St. Lawrence*. R Commodore



Commodore Chauncey, in this interval, profited little by his command of the lake, nor did any thing of much moment happen at Fort Erie, during Brown's temporary retirement.

The remaining operations of the last campaign, I shall defer to my next.

I find that I am assailed by a writer in the *Courant*, with a torrent of scurrilous abuse, which exceeds the oratory of Billingsgate, or even that of the most violent American Newspaper. To such democratic slang I shall make no reply, (it being precisely of the like tenor as was uttered in the Assembly of Upper Canada by Wilcocks and others, who afterwards went over to the enemy) but content myself with observing, that the scope and object of his doctrine, seems to be to maintain, that in no possible case, can an extraordinary power be exercised *by the King's Representative* for the preservation of the Province.

That on the eve of, or pending an invasion, although *he* should discover that the disaffected are labouring by machinations, both open and concealed, to palsy the means of defence, and feel conviction that they must thereby succeed in their views, *he even then* must still confine *himself* to the same line of proceeding, as would be applicable to the ordinary course of events, in times of peace and tranquility; and rather than apply an extraordinary remedy, although with a certainty of its proving effectual for the security

security of the Province committed to his charge, must quietly submit to the prospect of certain eventual conquest, and to the immediate starvation of his troops.

Now this doctrine I deny, and maintain, that it merits the execration of every good subject, however disguised under the mask of an affected regard for constitutional forms.

*VERITAS.*

Montreal, 31st May, 1815.

## (NO. IX.)

*To the Editor of the Montreal Herald*

SIR,

After our unfortunate attempt upon the enemy's position at Fort Erie, little was done there on either side for some time, excepting reciprocal attacks upon pickets and occasional cannonading, which were productive of a considerable loss of lives.

On the 17th of September, 1814, after General Brown had resumed the command, the enemy sallied out with about 5000 men, and made a bold attempt upon our batteries, wherein they succeeded by carrying them in the first instance, and spiking or disabling the guns ; but our troops most gallantly retook them at the point of the bayonet, in which recapture part of the 82d, under Major Proctor, and of the 6th, under Major Taylor, greatly distinguished themselves.

The attack by the enemy was made under a kind of surprise, which was facilitated by the very bad state of the weather, that enabled them to approach unperceived, close to the right of our position, and capture a number of DeWatteville's  
regt.



regt. there on duty. The loss on both sides was very severe. Ours in killed, wounded and prisoners, exceeded 600. Lieut. Cols. Fisher, Pearson, and Gordon, were severely wounded, and the latter afterwards died of his wounds. The enemy had also a number of their best officers killed and wounded.

This sortie of the enemy is the more remarkable, as having been a departure from their usual course, which was the Indian mode of warfare, with additional safe guards. The Indians make a point of never risking their persons, where it can be avoided, but look out for, and avail themselves of the cover of trees and other natural objects, which can enable them to kill the enemy, without danger to themselves. The American troops are alike careful of their persons in action, and use the same precautions wherever practicable, with the addition of artificial covering, by cutting down trees, and forming abattis, &c.

Our troops on the contrary, are too apt to despise those precautions, and to incur an excess of personal risk, as if they considered it derogatory in a soldier to go behind a tree or other cover. There can be no stronger proof of the enemy's want of confidence in themselves, and consequent repugance to meet our troops on ground where the bayonet could be used, than their not following our handfuls of men to any distance, after their landing near Fort George,  
in

in 1813 ; their allowing us to retreat from the battle at Street's Creek, without attempting to pursue ; their witnessing our disgraceful retreat at Plattsburg, without one effort to give it the colouring falsely pretended by General Macomb, of his having repulsed our attack, instead of the mortifying fact, that the disgrace arose entirely from the order given by Sir George Prevost, who prevented 12000 men from doing what any 3000 of them could have effected. And finally, near New-Orleans, where the American troops, from being completely under cover, sustained no loss, whilst ours were wholly exposed, and mowed down by hundreds at a time ; yet not a man moved out of their lines to follow up our repulse. In cases where no personal danger is incurred, it requires no other courage, than to stand until personal safety be ascertained.

It is an extraordinary circumstance, that in the late war, we neglected to adapt our tactics to the enemy we had to deal with, and the country we had to act in ; and it is alike extraordinary, that of that arm of our military force best qualified for American warfare, viz. Riflemen and Light Infantry, not a battalion of either was sent to Canada, although common sense, and the experience of the former American war, ought to have suggested the propriety and expediency of the measure.

To what is this to be ascribed ? Is it to the neglect of Sir George to make a requisition for such troops ? or is it, that in wishing to puff off his  
own

own merits, he deceived Government into a belief, that such were unnecessary, as if the militia had been quite sufficient to supply their place. Whatsoever the cause, the effect has been the loss of a great number of valuable lives, which with the numerous other lamentable neglects of that Commander, contributed to give the enemy advantages and pretexts for exultation, which otherwise could never have existed.

The rains in September were constant and excessive, which acting upon the swampy nature of the ground, where part of our troops were obliged to be placed near Fort Erie, and in conjunction with the privations to which they were subjected; made them so sickly, as to render it a point of prudence and expediency, after the loss of our heavy cannon, to fall back upon Chipewa, which was done gradually, without interruption from the enemy.

During this time, the large division of the enemy, under General Izard, who had moved from Plattsburg shortly before Sir George's memorable expedition thither, as if in thorough contempt of him, by presuming upon his military incapacity, (indeed it is alike incomprehensible, why Izard moved off, or why Sir George after he did move, did nothing against the miserable remnant of his force that he left behind under Macomb) had arrived at Sacket's Harbour, when finding that they still had the command of Lake Ontario, that division was embarked and  
sent



sent in vessels and craft a considerable distance up, and then disembarking on the south side, the troops marched by land to Buffalo, to join Gen. Brown.

At one time, it was reported, that they had landed on the British side at 12 mile creek, which indeed would have been most serious: General Brown emboldened by the approach of this force, drew nearer to our position at Chipewa, and when the junction was effected, an attempt was made to turn our right, in which they failed; after sustaining considerable loss. It is probable that the attempt would have been renewed, but for the reported approach of our fleet, which occasioned them to retreat with precipitation on the 19th of Oct. 1814, to Fort Erie, from which they finally retired on the 5th of Nov. to their own side, after destroying the fort and the other works; having previously sent over their artillery and stores, with part of their troops and militia, and thus ending that campaign.

After our ship the St. Lawrence of 100 guns was launched and fitted at Kingston, our fleet sailed from thence on the 16th of October with a reinforcement of troops and stores for Niagara, where they arrived soon after the Americans had retreated. Commodore Chauncey when he found that the 3 decker was ready, retired to Sacket's Harbour, and made no attempt to impede the contemplated relief to our troops.

It has been regretted, that our fleet did not carry up a sufficient force at once, to have enabled

bled General Drummond to have immediately followed up the enemy after their retreat, and in which case a great part of them, with their cannon and stores, would probably have been captured. In opposition to this, it has been maintained, and I think with truth, that it would have been unpardonable in Sir James Yeo to have taken on board such a number of troops, as to have incapacitated his squadron from fighting the enemy to advantage, in the battle that it was expected Commodore Chauncey would risk, to endeavor to defeat the object we had in view. Our fleet returned, and made a second trip from Kingston to Niagara early in Nov. but by this time the enemy had retired to their own side.

In the year 1814, the enemy made several incursions into the upper part of Upper Canada, for the express purpose of destroying private property, for on the 15th of May, a detachment of their army under Colonel Campbell, landed at Long Point on Lake Erie, pillaged and laid waste the adjacent country, burnt the village of Dover, with all the mills, stores, distilleries, and dwelling houses in the vicinity, carried away such property as was portable, and killed the cattle within their reach. The loss, by such destruction and pillage, was estimated at fifty thousand dollars.

On the 16th of August, some American troops and Indians in their service from Detroit, surprised

prised the settlement of Port Talbot, where they committed the most atrocious acts of violence, leaving upwards of 230 men, women and children, in a state of nakedness and want.

On the 20th September, a second excursion was made by the American garrison of Detroit, spreading fire and pillage through one of the settlements in the Western District of Upper Canada, whereby 27 families were reduced to misery. Early in November, same year, General M'Arthur with a large body of mounted Kentuckians and Indians, made a rapid march through the western and part of London Districts in that Province, burning the mills, destroying the provisions, and living upon the inhabitants.

Now, is it possible to conceive, that all those, and former acts of conflagration and pillage could have happened without orders from the American Govt. and yet if we had retaliated upon this principle in the Chesapeake or elsewhere, (which was completely in our power to have done) what an outcry would have been raised by Mr. Madison, and re-echoed by the opposition in the Imperial Parliament, who on finding themselves beat from their grounds of censure against our Government and officers for the destruction of the public buildings at Washington, when proved to have been merely retaliatory, then took up a new position equally untenable, viz. that it would have been *magnanimous not to have followed the example of the Americans in their conduct at York and Newark.* Now



Now in common sense, what does such doctrine mean ? Do these mock patriots reserve all their sympathies for the enemies of their country, and regard with callous indifference, the sufferings of their fellow subjects ? are the latter not entitled to protection and consideration, and as means of that protection, was it not incumbent upon our officers, and a point of justice, to turn against the enemy their own weapons, and thereby make them feel the consequences of their own enormity of conduct, with a view to prevent their repeating the like in future ?

It is very *magnanimous to be sure* to speak with cold blooded indifference about the infliction of ruin upon friends at the distance of 3,000 miles, by fire and devastation in the most aggravated shapes ; but I will venture to say, that if Mr. Whitbread's brewery and his princely mansion, with all their contents, had been at York or Newark, and shared the fate of the buildings there consigned to the flames by the enemy, we should never have heard of his lectures upon *the virtue of magnanimity*.

Those oppositionists are not more callous to the sufferings of our fellow subjects, than of our allies. What concern and reprobation have they not expressed at the pretended cruelties exercised by the Indians in our interest, against their enemies : but which of them has ever been heard to commiserate the fate of those poor creatures who were murdered in cold blood, to the south-

ward, by the remorseless Jackson and Coffee, as their own dispatches prove ; or at the systematic burning and destroying of Indian towns and corn fields to the northward, by the American troops and militia.

Has any of them ever lifted up his voice in Parliament, against the scandalous land pillage and other vexations and injustice practised against the Indians by the Americans, and to which they are re-consigned, by its having been omitted to be stipulated in the late treaty of peace, that neither Great Britain nor the United States, should have garrisons or custom houses within the Indian territory ; unless it be understood, that exemption therefrom makes part of the rights to which the natives were intitled in 1811 ; and yet with all these outrages and neglects staring them in the face, we find them running over the world in search of adventures or objects, whereon to exercise their tender feelings, in the cause of humanity.—nay, Mr. Whitbread seems tremblingly alive with apprehension that Great Britain may re-interfere to dethrone the Corsican, and does his utmost to save *that monster* from the attack of the Allied powers, all of whom he libels in the most gross and unmeasured language. Yet such is modern patriotism !

After the campaign of 1814 closed, General Drummond and Sir James Yeo came down to Montreal, to confer with Sir George Prevost upon

upon the plan of operations for the next year : whatsoever that plan was, is now not material to be known, but much valuable time was lost in point of preparation, by hesitating about whether to build vessels at Turkey point, on Lake Erie, or on Lake Huron. The latter was at last decided upon, as it ought to have been at first ; but if report be true, Sir George was blameless in this delay. Had he been half as anxious to prevent the loss of our lake Erie fleet, as it is said, he afterwards was to create a new one upon Lake Huron, (which certainly was the only secure situation to build after that loss) there never could have existed a question upon the subject, and all the misfortunes of the right division of our army would have been avoided,

Before however the result of the incredible expence incurred in winter 1814, could be known (and which expence, as also the similar excessive expenditure from winter 1813 onwards, were rendered necessary alone by the unpardonable preceding neglects) the news of peace very unexpectedly arrived, and put a stop to further naval and military preparations. Some time after Sir George was superseded and recalled, in a manner conveying the most pointed marks of the disapprobation of his Majesty's Government. The peace is negatively glorious to us, in so far as that the enemy have not gained any one point for which they went to war, and have lost valuable indulgencies, that we had granted them in former treaties ; yet I cannot but consider the



the terms of the treaty *unsatisfactory*, in not containing some provision for *the future security of the Canadas*, and *dishonorable*, in not providing for *the independence and protection of our Indian Allies*.

Although not coming within the scope of my plan at the onset, yet I cannot pass without observation, the species of deception, by which the American Naval service has obtained a degree of celebrity, to which it is not entitled in point of fact. During the peace subsequent to the American revolution, political differences of opinion amongst their parties, prevented their building line of battle ships with the timber which was provided for that purpose; but the federal party then in power, as a trick upon the democrats, who were out, worked up that timber into ships' which they called frigates, by reason of not having two complete gun-decks; but boasted of their being in effect 74's in disguise, which was perfectly true. It has however since been found more convenient for their national vanity, to play off the trick upon us; and dropping the appellation of 74's in disguise, to call them plain 44 gun frigates. By thus disguising their real strength, and cautiously in all their official accounts, speaking of them as frigates, and also concealing their weight of metal, and number of men, they have imposed upon the world, or at least the non-professional part of it, by inducing them to believe, that in their combats with us, it was frigates of 44 guns only against those of 38.

The

The fallacy of this will be manifest from the following statements: the President, Constitution, and United States, rated at 44 guns, are each 1630 tons, and carry 56 guns, of the following calibres; with each 480 to 500 picked men, viz:

32 long	24 pounders	discharging	768 lbs of ball,
2 do	18 do	do	36 - -
22	32lbs. carronades	do	704 - (I am uncertain if they are not 42lb. carronades)

56 guns exclusive of howitzers in the top 1508 lbs.—Now our 38 gun frigates with which they have had to combat, and which they captured, viz: Guerriere, Macedonian and Java, were each under 1000 tons, and the compliment of each 320 men and boys; the latter ship having supernumeraries going to the East Indies, had on board 377 men and boys. They each carried 49 guns of the following description:

28 long	18 prs.	discharging	504lbs. of ball,
2 do	9 do	do	18 ———
16 car'ds.	32 do	do	512 ———
2 do	12 do	do	94 ———
1 brass gun			6 ———
49 guns		do	1064 ———

It is proper to remark, that the Dragon, the largest 74 in the British Navy, is two feet shorter but two feet broader than the American 44's. Her tonnage is 1798 and their's 1630. The average tonnage of 12 British 74's is only 1628, being the same as the said 44's. Upon the whole therefore, it is evident, that what they have been puffing off to the world as equal combat,

bat, has been at least as 6 to 4; and if their over-proportion of able or professional seamen, to what our ships carry, be considered, the difference is still greater, perhaps two to one.

In the sloops of war, there was the like disproportion, as for instance, the American sloop *Hornet* carried 18 carronades of 32 lbs. 4 long 9 and 2 long 6 pounders, with 165 picked men—the British sloop or brig *Peacock*, had 16 carronades of 24lbs. and 2 long 9's. with 122 men and boys.

The same cheat, or rather a much greater, is in progress with the 76's lately built, which are to carry 800 or 900 men each, and to discharge the following broadsides, viz :

16 long 42 prs. lower deck	672 lbs.
16 do 24 do. upper deck	384.
2 do 24 do. qr. deck	48.
10 car'ds 42 do. dk. forecastle	420.
4 do 24 do. poop	96.
48 guns of a side, in all	1620 lbs.

A British ship of 3 decks, rated at 98, carries 112 guns, discharging a broadside of

14 long 32 lower deck	448 lbs.
14 do 24 middle do	336, some have 15 on this deck.
14 do 12 upper do	168.
2 do 18 } qr. deck	36.
7 car'ds 32 } and forecastle	224.
4 do 24 poop	96.
55 guns of a side, in all	1308 lbs. and 750 men.
The	



The Americans have also lately built a description of what they call frigates, to be rated 48 guns and to carry 62 guns each with 600 men,

Viz: 34 long 32 pounders,

4 do 24 do

24 car'ds 42 do

The length of their gun-deck is above 180 feet.

It is to be regretted, that in part we have sanctioned this deception, which the Americans have superlatively increased. It was common in our official accounts of battles with the French to state our ships according to their rate in the Navy, and the captured enemy at the actual number of guns he carried ; and thus the Americans have had the modesty to say, but most falsely, that they have captured British men of war at sea of equal force, which the French never could. Now the fact is, that neither have captured our ships of equal force, and it is alike true, that we never conquered a French ship of of the like actual superiority to ours, as the American ships which we engaged really possessed in intrinsic force.

In the only actions we have had with American ships of war, wherein the respective force was nearly alike, (for I shall not notice the real difference of strength, it being on the side of the enemy) viz : the Shannon and Chesapeake frigates, and Pelican and Argus sloops ; both were taken in a style, and in a space of which perhaps there is no naval precedent. It is a pity that every thing could not be reduced to arith-

metrical calculation. For when such can be done, the deception ceases.

To prevent, therefore, imposition upon the world, it should be laid down as an invariable rule in all naval actions, to state the actual number, size, and description of guns carried on both sides, with the real number of men on board at the time, and how many thereof are rated able seamen; were this truly done, there would be an end of gasconade, and an invariable criterion established for ascertaining the real strength of nerves. Indeed no ship should be rated lower than what she carries.

A British man of war's crew is composed of 4 classes, viz: able seamen, ordinary seamen, landsmen, including boys and marines; if a ship has a fourth of her crew rated able, she is considered to be well manned, whereas an American ship of war, for their having but few in number to man, has half her crew or more, regularly bred seamen. By the capture of the *President* and *Chesapeake*, the real state of their force and equipment will have been discovered, and evince more especially as to the former, her wonderful over proportion of force to her pretended rate.

It is a fact that speaks volumes to the credit of our Navy, that in no instance have our men of war declined the combat against equal numbers whatsoever the inequality of force, nor surrendered before they were in a sinking state; where-

whereas I know of no case where an American ship of war sought for an action, with one of ours of superior force ; but it is upon record that the redoubtable Commodore Rogers, in the President, run sixty hours in the North Sea, from the Alexandria frigate, magnifying her into a line of battle ship, and at the commencement of the war, he was so shy of the Belvidera, as to let her escape, altho' he had some other American frigates astern.

The following has been handed to me as being a more correct statement of the action at Lundy's Lane, and previous movements, than the abstract thereof given by me, and it being stated to be the result of personal observation. I give it in the writer's own words, altho' in detail somewhat beyond the space that I had allotted to myself for this number.

“ General Brown retired from Queenston on Sunday, the 24th of July, 1814; intelligence of which reaching the division under General Riall, at the 12 mile Creek, the Glengary light infantry, and Incorporated Militia only, marched that night about eleven o'clock, for Lundy's Lane, where they arrived next morning about 7 o'clock, in all about 700 men ; the Glengary's, commanded by Lieut. Col. Batterby, the Militia by Lieut. Col. Robinson, and the whole under Lieut. Col. Pearson, Inspecting Field Officer.

General Brown, in the course of the afternoon of the 15th, received intelligence of their weakness



weakness, and General Scott with about 1600 men, infantry and dragoons, with several field pieces, came out from Chippewa about 6 o'clock to attack them.

Most fortunately General Drummond had that morning landed from York with the 89th regt. and with that corps, and detachments of the Royal Scots and King's regt. drawn from the forts, in all about 800 men ; immediately marched towards Chippewa. The detachment on the south bank of the River Niagara, consisting of the 41st regt. after capturing the Post at Lewiston was crossed to our own shore, and returned to the forts, or remained at Queenston, the light company excepted.

The troops from Fort George, after dining at Queenston between 4 and 5 in the afternoon, continued their march with Gen. Drummond at their head, and had got within half a mile of Lundy's lane, when they received intelligence that the American army were advancing.—Our Troops were halted and joined by the Incorporated Militia, when General Drummond and staff rode in advance to reconnoitre. The Glengaries had remained at the Lane ; orders were immediately sent for our troops to advance, and the General had barely time to take a position when both his flanks were engaged. Veritas says, The unequal contest was continued bravely for some time, but being overpowered, the troops were retreating &c. This would lead to

a belief that at one time we had been beaten, but which was not the case at any one moment, nor did we yield them one foot of ground. A little before dusk the enemy received strong reinforcements, when the action became general, and though our left was very hard pressed, it never was overpowered. About 400 of the enemy made a detour along the river on our left, and gained the Niagara road in our rear, and it was then that they took General Riall and most of our prisoners.

The remainder of our Troops at the 12 mile creek were ordered to march at 3 that morning, and were under arms at that hour, but by some fatality the order was countermanded, and they did not move till past 12 o'clock.—Then when General Riall first learnt that the enemy were advancing, he sent an officer to meet Col. Scott of the 103d, with orders to retire on Queenston. This order reached him about 3 miles from the field a short time before the action began, and before the Colonel received a counter order, he had made in pursuance of the first order a retrograde movement of nearly 4 miles, so that it was past 9 o'clock before he and his men could come up, who were then a good deal blown, and then it was so dark, that but a partial advantage of their arrival could be taken.—Thus the action was chiefly fought by the troops originally engaged."

It would be very satisfactory to me, that this statement should prove more correct than the

other ; but I certainly did understand, and I am not singular in so doing, that a part of our troops overpowered by numbers, had at one time commenced a retreat, but most gallantly renewed the combat.

I hoped to have closed the military part of my narrative in this number, but find that I must defer it to my next. VERITAS.

*Montreal, 7th June 1815.*



## (NO. X.)

*To the Editor of the Montreal Herald*

SIR,

Having come to the close of my narrative of Sir George's military administration, it only remains to make a short recapitulation with a few remarks.

To the unprejudiced it will be evident from the facts adduced, that at the commencement of the late war, although so long threatened, he had adopted no measure for procuring early, or indeed any information upon the subject; and the whole of its progress was marked by such a deficiency of intelligence as almost on every occasion to demonstrate, that he was ignorant of the enemy, and without any plan of operations other than a disheartening defensive system, entirely dependent upon the developement of their movements, without attempt at circumvention or counteraction.

That neither Sir George nor his pretended friends, had any agency in the example which drew forth the services of the militia of the Lower Province, or in quelling the disturbances which were produced by the execution of his own militia act.

That

That to General Brock's zeal and energy, left as he was without orders, along with other causes independent of Sir George, the preservation of Upper Canada in the first instance, and of Lower Canada as a consequence, are mainly to be ascribed.

That at the beginning of the war we had a great superiority in vessels on Lakes Ontario and Erie, which the crew of a sloop of war in 1812 would have secured to us ; but which superiority he allowed by inaction and neglect to be wrested from us by means of the building of vessels that could have been prevented, and especially by suffering the formation of the naval establishment at Sackett's Harbor, which might have been destroyed.

That the loss of our fleet upon Lake Erie, arose from a like neglect of the Presque Isle establishment, and from a great deficiency in the equipment and crews of our vessels under the command of Captain Barclay, which it was the duty of Sir George, who then directed both services, to have prevented.

That in 1813, when he made an attack upon Sackett's Harbour, it was, when on the point of surrender, abandoned in a manner disreputable to our military character.

That by some strange fatality, the attempt was never afterwards renewed, although it was evident to every man of common understanding acquainted

acquainted with the country, that the result of the war on the side of Canada, must depend upon the command of the Lakes; and that such command could not be maintained, but at an intolerable expence, and then very precariously, unless the establishment at Sackett's harbour could be destroyed.

That inaction and neglect at the outset, laid the foundation of a necessity for a most lavish expenditure in the progress of the war, and especially in the last stage of it, to the extent of many millions sterling, whereby the government and the nation became dissatisfied, and finally were so completely disappointed in their expectations from the very extensive military and other resources placed under the direction of Sir George, as to engender a general wish for peace on almost any terms; and therefore whatsoever there may be in the conditions of peace, which are not what they would or ought to have been under different circumstances, may very fairly be ascribed to Sir George's mismanagement of those resources, and general incapacity for the high situation he held.

That the loss of our fleet upon Lake Champlain, unquestionably in part proceeded from a premature attack by its Commander, Capt. Downie, and which attack would not have been made when it was, had he not been urged thereto; or even if not urged in express terms, certainly not without a confidence in a joint attack or co-



operation on the part of the army, but no such attack or co-operation took place.

The loss however of that fleet, mortifying as it was, is trifling, when compared with the humiliation resulting from the fatal expedition to Plattsburgh, and the disgraceful retreat therefrom without fighting; because Sir George thereby cast a stain upon our well earned military renown, which has had a most pernicious moral effect at a distance, viewed as it has been through American misrepresentation, and consequently exaggerated into a military defeat, instead of being considered as it really was, owing to the gross fault of the commander alone, in direct opposition to the wishes and feelings of almost every officer and soldier in his army.

And what adds to the misfortune, is, that no reasoning or explanation can ever effectually eradicate the false impression made by that lamentable retreat, in which our gallant troops were such indignant actors, and which impression may be the cause of bringing about another war upon the part of the United States, at an earlier period than would have been the case, had the fleet been saved and the works of Plattsburg carried.

The candid part of the American officers, ridicule Sir George's conduct at Sackett's Harbour and Plattsburg, although benefiting thereby as much as we can do, who are such heavy sufferers therefrom.

I shall only add that the severe losses sustained by our troops in the hard fought campaign of 1814 on the Niagara line, arose from the obstinate neglect of Sir George to furnish reinforcements to that part of the army on the opening of the navigation, notwithstanding the manifest preparations of the enemy to make their real attack in that quarter.

Moreover I am informed, that Sir George and General Sheaffe, when at York in winter 1812, were of opinion, that Upper Canada could not be defended with the then means; in which opinion a gentleman in high civil situation there joined;—so that it may be truly said, both Provinces were preserved by a kind of miracle in aid of the exertions of others, in spite of the opinions, incapacity, and egregious blunders of the Commander of the forces, and against his intentions of evacuating the country beyond Kingston, and General Sheaffe's wish for a premature abandonment of Fort Erie.

It was my intention to have given also a sketch of Sir George's civil administration, but reflecting that it has been already so ably depicted, by NERVA, in his admirably written allegory, I shall, for the present not prosecute that intention.

VERITAS,

*Montreal, 7th June 1815.*

FINIS.

















